

**THE ROOTS OF
MODERN JOURNALISM
IN KERALA**

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Winner of *Thayatt* Award 2003

**Dr. BABU CHERIAN
JACOB ISAAC**



Media House
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The Roots of Modern Journalism in Kerala

(An English translation of The Malayalam title *Jnananikshepam Patavum Patanavum*, winner of Thayatt award 2013)

Dr. Babu Cherian & Jacob Isaac

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Dedicated to

John Hawksworth,
The founder editor of Jnananikshepam,
The first printed newspaper in Malayalam language.

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A winner of World Congress Poetry Prize at the Twenty Second World Congress of Poets and the Excellence in Poetry Award instituted by the United Poets Laureate International, Jacob Isaac has a gift of rhythm and music inherent in him. With a Masters degree in English Literature from S.V. University, Andhra Pradesh, he is the Founder and Director of the Good Shepherd Education Project in South Africa, the country he came to serve in the field of education way back in 1989.

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Equally at home in English and his mother tongue

Malayalam, he has written many poems which are published in reputed international journals and anthologies.

His treatise “Gnananikshepam: Padnavum Padavum” won the prestigious Thayattu Award in 2002.

Jacob was born in Kerala as the son of Prof. M. Isaac and Mrs. Thankamma Isaac. He is married to Sobha Sara Jacob and they have two children - Thankom and Aravind.

FOREWORD

The first newspaper in Malayalam language was *Rajyasamacharam*, which began in 1847. In the very next year the first printed newspaper and the third one in Malayalam began to be published from CMS Press Kottayam. This was *Jnananikshepam*, which defined its main objective as ‘propagation of knowledge and the distribution of news.’

Rajyasamacharam survived only till December 1850. During this period forty two issues were published. *Jnananikshepam* suspended publication once. But it survived this lapse and continues to reach its copy in the hands of its readers every month and remains a wonder in the history of journalism. The story of publications earlier to *Jnananikshepam* is not different from what happened to those who came after it. The number of newspapers which originated in the same century as *Jnananikshepam* did and is still being published today can be counted by the fingers of one hand. It would be interesting to inquire into the birth of weekly newspapers how many decades after *Jnananikshepam* had appeared on the newspaper horizon and also how many years these weeklies took to become daily newspapers. In any case the distance from the first printed news magazine to the first daily newspaper is very many decades.

According to available records, the publication of *Jnananikshepam* was suspended some time before 1898. But the objectives and content of the revived *Jnananikshepam* were quite different from the one before the suspension. Therefore the second birth of *Jnananikshepam* has significance in the study based on subjects covered by the news magazine.

Rajyasamacharam and *Paschimodayam* were the first models of periodicals in Malayalam whereas the *Jnananikshepam* laid the foundation of Malayalam journalism. The presentation and the competent utilization of all the assumptions behind journalism were present in *Jnananikshepam*. The diverse approaches adopted by *Jnananikshepam* in the portrayal of news are today available in the breaking news techniques expounded by the present day newspapers with minor modifications. This was the pioneering style of *Jnananikshepam* as a news magazine. Besides these there were many other significant contributions made by *Jnananikshepam* to Malayalam literature and culture.

Each issue of *Jnananikshepam* published every month consisted of eight pages. Perusing each issue, one comes across the mature examples of modern Malayalam prose, which originated in spoken language and eventually blossomed into an enchanting script over the years.

More than a diversity of prose compositions, we are thunder-struck by the assortment of topics chosen by *Jnananikshepam* for its readers. Most of the concerns, both small and big, which had arisen from the compulsions of man himself and his circumstances were sometime or the other had been lucidly dealt with by the news magazine. The information about the sun and the other planets, the continents, the oceans, volcanoes, history, science and technology, human anatomy and medical practice, all were the appealing contents of *Jnananikshepam*. Moreover the news magazine also covered spiritual matters. In fact, everything a reader would be interested to know about man, nature and God found space in it. However the astonishing aspect was that this attractive medley of subjects was described in just eight pages. The diversity in style and in subjects is something which the news magazines that followed *Jnananikshepam* and even the contemporary magazines boasting of eighty pages have found it difficult to emulate. However, it could be argued that at a time

when there is a plethora of magazines dealing with children, women, sports, family and so on, an all-in-one, comprehensive approach is not very relevant or valid. Nevertheless through different editions and special columns the great diversity of subjects can be seen in the present newspapers.

With justifiable pride we believe that this analytical study of *Jnananikshepam* has, with the support of adequate and strong evidence, succeeded in removing the cobwebs of misunderstandings surrounding the first editor of *Jnananikshepam*. This study convincingly asserts that the first (founding) editor of *Jnananikshepam* was John Hawksworth and not Benjamin Bailey as was generally perceived.

The study of script in our language had reached the stage of copying by hand. Regrettably no further progress seemed to have been made. The arrival of printing was a significant defining moment in the urbanization of the world. But no study has been undertaken to evaluate how printing had affected our system of script or how it adjusted to the new technology of culture. In this study we have attempted to share some insights regarding Malayalam typography.

All those who have written about the history of publication as well as about the history of Malayalam journalism have indeed commented about *Jnananikshepam*. This shows the dominant position this news magazine occupied in the cultural history of Malayalees. Unfortunately, however, only one or two among those who have studied and written about *Jnananikshepam* have gone beyond the consideration of the magazine as a mouthpiece. Therefore a news magazine which ought to have been the invaluable source for studies regarding language, literature and culture either remained a little known entity or was completely forgotten. Some even thought that it belonged to the category of magazines such as *Rajyasamacharam*

or *Paschimodayam*, which were comparatively better known. We believe that this study would fill the hiatus brought about by the non-availability and disregard for *Jnananikshepam*.

Some selected compositions from certain issues of *Jnananikshepam* have been included in this study, which would hopefully make knowing the magazine easier and studying it better.

We are indebted to the CMS Press Manager, Rajan Itticheria, for the encouragement and support given us to publish this volume. We hereby express our immense gratitude to him and all the employees of the Press, who have helped us at the different stages of its production as well as finally print it.

We are bereft of words to express our gratitude to Advocate K.I. Ninan who has spread much light on missionary history and literature through his books and speeches. Dr. T.V. Mathew, befitting his status as an excellent teacher, has given us timely and appropriate guidance in the process of this research work. Professor M.K. Cherian Kozhuvalloor, G. Priyadarsan, Dr. N. Sam, Dr. Scaria Sakaria have helped us in the composition of this work. We are indebted to all of them.

The late Dr. Samuel Chandappally had untiringly walked the path of Malayalam prose with his pen in hand to write constantly. He was the chief inspiration behind this study. We humbly dedicate this work to his unforgettable personality and august memory.

**Babu Cherian &
Jacob Isaac Kalimadom**

I

THE LIGHT TOWER IN THE HISTORY OF MALAYALAM NEWSPAPER

The eminent historian of Printing S.H. Stienberg has segregated the history of printing into three epochs.

1. AD 1450-1550. The era in which modern printing commenced and was propagated.
2. AD 1550-1800. The stage of providing superior quality to the discoveries vis-à-vis printing in the first period as well as their expansion.
3. AD 1800 onwards. The period of emergence of excellent technological competence in printing.¹

Each of these three stages has its own distinctive characteristics. The second period (1550-1800) bears witness to the rise of newspapers and periodicals, which today, are inseparably linked to the daily lives of people. During this stage the publications such as weeklies and magazines achieved the position of being the first and important intermediaries appropriate for information dissemination.

As the history of printing crossed over to the second period from the first, the printing technology reached the shores of Kerala.² But it was in Tamil language rather than in Malayalam. Similarly news journals and periodicals also originated in Kerala quite later. Although the saga of periodicals marks

their beginning in the second period of newspaper history, the definitive commencement of periodicals in Kerala happened only in the third era beginning from AD 1800, to be more precise in the month of June 1847. On that day the first volume of '*Rajyasamacharam*', the first magazine and newspaper in Malayalam was published from Illikunnu near Thalacherry. After three months, in October 1847, the second periodical in Malayalam with the title '*Paschimodayam*'³ was also published from Illikunnu. The third Malayalam newspaper was '*Jnananikshepam*' (The Treasury of Knowledge). From the first day of the Malayalam month, 'Vrischika' (November 16 – December 15) it began to be published as a magazine from C.M.S. Press, Kottayam.

C.M.S. Mission (Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East) was established in England for mission work in the Eastern countries and Africa. It is widely believed that in order to commemorate the 50th anniversary celebrations of the Missionary Society, the magazine, '*Jnananikshepam*' had commenced publication.⁴ This belief appears to be based on the fact that the Church Missionary Society was founded in April, 1799. In April 1899 it completed fifty years of yeoman service. In order to commemorate the occasion in an appropriate manner, worldwide, a CMS Committee was given that task for implementation. This august occasion was celebrated on November 1st, 1848. The magazine '*Jnananikshepam*' also saw the light of the day on the first of 'Vrischikam' (November).

The first three Malayalam magazines were published in the years 1847 and 1848. Thereafter a span of sixteen years passed by before another periodical could be published in Malayalam. Thus the fourth magazine to see the light of the day had the title '*Vidyasamgraham*' which began publication in July 1864 from C.M.S. College, Kottayam. But by the time '*Vidyasamgraham*' began to appear, the publication of the first two magazines

had been suspended. '*Rajyasamacharam*' appeared only till November, 1850 and '*Paschimodayam*' till August 1851. Briefly stated, from August 1851 to July 1864, there was only one single news bulletin. And that happened to be '*Jnananikshepam*'. '*Vidyasamgraham*' began its publication in July. And next year in August 1865, the fifth periodical in Malayalam '*Paschimataraka*' saw the light of the day.⁵

Some news flashes about newspapers

In the September issue of '*Jnananikshepam*', 1860, some statistical data regarding newspapers was published along with other news. This makes not only interesting reading but also gives a knowledgeable peep into the history of journalism in Kerala.

"Newspapers. There are as many as 3364 newspapers being published in different parts of North America. There are 272 newspapers in England and Wales; 66 in Scotland; 113 in Ireland; 17 in British Islands; 1500 in Spain; very few in Italy; 13 in Constantinople; about 100 in Russia; about 10 or 12 in India, although clear information is not available; one from Kochi. Only one is included, because there was nothing appropriate and suitable that could be included."

This breaking news under the headline newspapers in '*Jnananikshepam*' clearly reveals a fact which in the history of Malayalam journalism the initial times was quite unclear. It concerns the newspaper which '*Jnananikshepam*' points out as being published from Kochi. The truth of this newspaper was that it was not a Malayalam newspaper at all. But an English one with the name '*Western Star*'.

All those who have carried out a study regarding the history of Malayalam journalism hold similar views on the activities of Western Star from where '*Western Star*' and '*Paschimataraka*'

were printed. In the history of journalism in Kerala, Puthupally Raghavan writes the following: “Englishman Walker together with Devaji, Bhimaji, writer Kurian and others set up a press called ‘Western Star’ in British Kochi in 1860-62. Western Star Press was the first co-operative venture between Europeans and the local people in the land of Kerala. A weekly in English with the same name as the press was also started from there” (p.60).

Dr. N. Sam, in his book ‘Social Renaissance and Literature’ in Kerala has written the following about Western Star Press and the newspapers emanating from there: “In 1860 a printing press named Malabar Printing Company Limited was established with the main aim of publishing a newspaper from British Kochi. The combined effort of Devaji Bhimji, who was a Gujarati, C. Kurian of Akkara family in Kottayam, Paul Melvyn Walker, a prominent Anglo-Indian and Sir Charles Lawson was clearly discernible behind the venture. However they could manage to bring out a newspaper from Kochi only after four years. In 1864 an English paper called Western Star appeared from there. One year after the Western Star saw the light of the dawn, the publishers hit upon the idea of having a Malayalam edition to the Star. And thus ‘*Paschimataraka*’ the Malayalam newspaper began to be published from the same press” (page 175, 176).

However the conclusions of Puthupally Raghavan and Dr. N. Sam regarding Western Star have their basis in the observations of T.M. Chummar. T.M. Chummar had commented in his book on the History of Prose Literature that the establishment of the Press was in 1862. But in an article ‘Malayalam Newspapers – the Middle Period’, in the volume commemorating 100 years of Satyanadam, he corrected the year to 1860⁶. Therefore it appears evident that the inference of Puthupally Raghavan regarding the establishment of Western Star Press in British Kochi as during the 1860-62 period is founded on T.M. Chummar’s views.

T.M. Chummar also found the evidence for reckoning the beginnings of *Paschimataraka*. Disagreeing⁷ with Ulloor’s view on the segregation of periods, T.M. Chummar wrote: “This opinion of the great poet seems to have some errors. In the *Satyanadam* dated 16th March 1878 a statement regarding *Paschimataraka* is recorded in the following manner: “The news about the demise of the Pope is alluded by Taraka paper in its 8th number, 14th volume. Thereafter it is noted like this. ‘If we make the computation based on this document, the beginning of *Paschimataraka* happened in the month of August, 1864. And it was not known in the beginning as ‘*Paschimataraka – Kerala Pathaka*’.” The document discovered by T.M. Chummar may be considered as authentic. But it appears that errors have crept into his surmises. Because, if the 14th volume of *Taraka* was published in 1878, the 13th volume would have been in 1877, the 12th in 1876, the 11th in 1875 and thus a backward inference would take us to the year 1865 as the year of the 1st volume⁸. In such a situation, the opinion of Dr. N. Sam regarding the publication of the Malayalam newspaper *Paschimataraka* appears to be more acceptable.

But the statement of Dr. N. Sam that Western Star was first published in 1864 is not free from inaccuracies, either. According to the above quoted news story in *Jnananikshepam* that a newspaper was published in 1860 from Kochi is quite clear. There is no doubt that this newspaper was the English publication, brought out by the Western Star Press that was established in 1860. Probably Dr. N. Sam went wrong in his inference due to the remarks of Puthupally Raghavan on this matter. “Without much delay from the publication of Western Star, the first Malayalam newspaper in Kerala, *Paschimataraka* began to be published from the Western Star Press⁹.” He had commented.

However, even Puthupally Raghavan was wrong regarding

the beginning of Western Star. This is evident from his remarks about Western Star in his book, *History of Journalism in Kerala*¹⁰ as well as in the work he had depended on to obtain information regarding Kallur Oommen Philipose¹¹, one of the editors of Western Star. Listen to the narration given in that work: “Paul Melvyn Walker together with Writer Kurian of Karukancherry, Kottayam (and others) started a printing press in 1860. In 1864 an English publication named Western Star commenced publication from there. Without further delay a Malayalam paper known as *Paschimataraka* also came out of the same press¹².” These remarks might have been the source of the confusion regarding the beginning of Western Star among the scholars.

Briefly stated, the first fortnightly journal of Kerala, Western Star started publication in English in 1860, the same year as the setting of Western Star Printing Press. But it is not known how long the publication lasted. Thus the English newspaper published from Kochi and *Jnananikshepam* (The Treasury of Knowledge), the newspaper published from Kottayam were the only periodicals in Kerala till the arrival of *Vidyasamgraham*. And in over twelve years, that is, from 1851 when *Paschimodayam* ceased publication, till the arrival of *Vidyasamgraham* in 1864, the only journal which was in circulation in Kerala was *Jnananikshepam*.

Among the first three periodicals such as *Rajyasamacharam*, *Paschimodayam* and *Jnananikshepam*, there were substantial differences in the content and printing technology used by magazines published from Tellicherry and Kottayam. Whereas *Rajyasamacharam* and *Paschimodayam* used stencil for taking copies to be distributed, *Jnananikshepam* made use of movable types for printing.

Printing by Gutenberg and the History of Periodicals in Kerala

The story of printing in the world begins with the event of printing the now world famous 42-line Bible by Johann Gutenberg (Johann Gensfleisch Zum Gutenberg) using movable types. Various kinds of printing had existed even before Gutenberg's discovery. The types used then were either wooden blocks or engraved metal plates or stamping technique on stone or other means for taking similar copies. But beyond being handicrafts skill, these categories of 'printing' have no importance in the history of printing. It is with the discovery of Gutenberg that printing later received speed and acclaim. The excellence of modern printing lies in its competence to print more copies with more speed at economic rates. Gutenberg made the printing machine that prints a definite number of copies within a stipulated time. Naturally successors to Gutenberg are equipments which can print a great number of copies at much greater speed in a very little time. As a matter of fact, only machines with greater speeds can print the periodicals of today. The etching techniques available before Gutenberg's time did not have the possibility to achieve such technological excellence nor increase the printing quality in any manner.

The printing technology initially created wonders in the publication of books and through it in the dissemination of knowledge. Compared to the production of books using the copying technique, the features of the new technology were astounding. The copying of books which took very many months to be completed, hardly took a couple of months, that too in great numbers. And the copying was not limited to one at a time; but 700-800 copies at one time. And the cost? Comparatively much less. John Fustu who advanced money to Gutenberg to initially set up a printing machine says the

following regarding the sale of the Bible. This is referred to in one of the articles in the '*Bhashaposhini*' of earlier days: "He reached Paris to sell many books, which were printed in a steady writing. The cost of one hand copied Bible then was 125 pounds. Fustu started selling the books at 15 pounds per copy. Those who wanted more copies received them without delay as was the hallmark of hand copied books. And all the books appeared to be the same. Seeing these, the amazement of people was beyond words."

During the second era of printing, periodicals dominated the scene, having pushed books to the background a little. The credit for publishing magazines as periodicals goes to the features of the new printing technology such as low cost, more copies, more speed, etc. These factors considerably helped the publications to maintain their popularity and circulation.

Before the emergence of printing, there were different categories of news journals in different countries. "In the initial days of Journalism in all countries, hand-written newsletters were circulated¹³." But all these newsletters, except those which adopted printing technology, due to their limitation in circulations and short span of life, eventually came to an end. Just as printing achieved speed with the discovery of Gutenberg, the same technological finding was responsible for transforming the entire periodical world with new features. Before the arrival of printing using movable types, the history of journalism was alienated and inadequate attempts to reflect news. These attempts could not at all transform themselves into news journalism.

Editing and proof reading are the two fundamental actions in the publication process of books and periodicals. In the absence of these two crucial deeds, the publishing effort would be defective. The character units, which were cast as movable types

opened unlimited possibilities in the diversity of composing. These units made it highly convenient to make corrections, additions and removals in a given text by changing a letter, sub letter, number sign in any number of sentences. Each printing type being cast in varied shapes and sizes for use in composing opened the way to lay out assumptions. Thus with the emergence of movable types, which could be relocated, made proof reading, lay out, editing and sub editing quite convenient and through these circumstances for publishing technologically superior books and magazines were created. This was the history making factor in the printing revolution of Gutenberg¹⁴. This technological excellence is visible in *Jnananikshepam*. Since copies were taken after writing by hand, the stencil based printing did not have these technological superiority nor typographical possibilities. Typography is the soul of the art of printing. In the history of Malayalam journalism, the first publication that implemented the variety and the possibilities of typography is *Jnananikshepam* (The Treasury of Knowledge).

Three Magazines

The magazine *Jnananikshepam* and its predecessors such as *Rajyasamacharam* and *Paschimodayam* had maintained differences in their contents, which need to be recognised with the seriousness they deserve.

The word 'Samacharam' in *Rajyasamacharam* implies news. But the term 'Rajyam' does not signify a country in a mundane sense. It alludes to a divine country. The 'rajyam' in *Rajyasamacharam* is Kingdom of God or heaven. The King, Jesus Christ rules over that country. The aim of *Rajyasamacharam* was to inform Christians the news that happen there for the glory of the King and joy of the people. Its intention was not certainly concerned with the news that took place daily in each country or to inform the happenings in the Malayalarajyam.

The objective behind the journal was stated in a manner that it did not raise any doubt whatsoever, in a note, which could be interpreted either as an Editorial or statement of policy, on the first page of the first issue (June 1847) of *Rajyasamacharam*.

“It is not certain whether the meaning of the word would be grasped correctly. It is not our task to inform readers the daily happenings of each country. One need not think we are going to inform the news of Malayalarajyam either. Our country is alternatively known as divine country or heavenly country. It is not in a specific place either in Malayalam or in India. It is spread in the South, North, East and West, in the ocean and surroundings – in fact, all over. Jesus Christ, the King reigns right in the middle of his enemies. His Kingdom consists of the subjects who obey him. Like the King they are also defeated periodically. Decline and tremor take place. There is also success everyday. We believe that some of these news must be informed for the praise of the King and happiness of the subjects. Let God’s blessings be there.”

Rajyasamacharam was published from June 1847 till November 1850. 42 issues could have been published within this period. Whereas two numbers could have been published between June and September 1847, but only one issue saw the light of the day. Thus a total of 41 numbers were published. Among these, the 16th number, which is the issue of October 1848 is not available today¹⁵. A number was not accorded to the first issue, but the place of publication, year and month are alluded to as Tellicherry, 1847, June. The second issue indicates No.2, Tellicherry, 1847; but the month of publication is absent. Therefore it is not clear whether the reference is to July or August issue. One cannot also determine in which month the periodical did not appear. In the third issue, the serial number, place of publication, year, month were all given in order. Up to December, 1848 the volume numbers were continuous (1-18).

From January to December, 1849 the numbers were given 1 to 12. However, in January 1850, the numbers again begins at 1 and ends in November with 11th issue. Although majority of the volumes were having six pages, there are also issues running to eight and four pages. The price is not mentioned.

Rajyasamacharam gave emphasis to the news of divine country. “Each volume contains the reports of missionary work in different parts of the divine country, doctrinal criticism of the belief of Hindus and Muslims, experiential witness of those who accepted gospels and lessons in morals¹⁶.” Non-religious news were also published now and then. For example, the 18th issue published in December 1848, there was a news story on ‘Turmoil in Vienna’. Beginning with the statement that ‘Austria has no peace, it elaborated on the war details taking place through Kaiser, Laberge, Yellakukay and concludes: “More internal turmoil was on the anvil was predicted which would make rivers of blood flow. It was difficult to speculate whether the success would be with Kaiser or the city people. Thus the decrease in obedience and faithfulness and increase in cruelty in European countries was an evil and the sorrowful omen of the times.”

Even when presenting world news, the attempt to give a Christian dimension to them was visible in the news coverage of *Rajyasamacharam*. Subsequent to the Vienna turmoil referred to above, the news story about ‘Golden earth’ was a significant example. The news was about people in California in North America and how they had made a limitless collection of gold. “The White men living in North America fought a war for two years with Mexicans and won the war. And to meet the war expenses, they ruled over the land, which was mostly forest area. Forest dwellers had hunted there for their livelihood. But now the White men had come and cleared the forest to dwell there. It had a river, named Sacramento. Some time earlier some people

had seen there gold dust mixed up with soil. And when they searched further, they came upon gold lying in the ground in different sizes such as of a mustard seed and arecanuts. One person collected gold worth three hundred Rupees in a day. Some people got less. Therefore men, women and children, all together left their homes and went to the river bank and worked hard to filter gold from sand. Educated people, fighter, peons and even the governor forgot about their homes and land went to the river bank in search of gold... Prices of materials increased a hundredfold. Everyone became intoxicated with the desire for gold and it spread like fever.

This is a story which is a shame to Christians! Oh sometimes houses and land were abandoned to search for knowledge and one goes to the forest. But after reaching there, forgetting the original purpose, one gets stuck to just one demand and one place. And again and again looked for it and without being satiated collected as much as possible.”

Periodicals have two missions to fulfil. One, the dissemination of news; the other, dispersal of information (knowledge). All the timely information that a reader ought to be aware of falls under the ambit of news. Therefore in the matter of newspapers, which were the main part of periodical publications, all these were to be included. The first paper from Tellicherry addressed itself to the distribution of news about heavenly kingdom; and the second laid emphasis on sharing of information (knowledge). The biographer of Gundert, K.P. Varied says that the magazine *Paschimodayam* was more popular than *Rajyasamacharam*. He describes *Rajyasamacharam* in this manner: “It has 8 pages in royal size. Some issues had only 4 and 6 pages. The cost of one issue was two paise. Subscription for one year was half a Rupee. It is known that the publication of *Paschimodayam* continued for about four years, from October

1847 till August 1851. It appears that thereafter it stopped publication¹⁷.”

The aim of *Paschimodayam* was to spread the light of Western scientific knowledge. *Paschimodayam* also held the view that the form of language most suitable for the communication of modern knowledge was prose. The policy declaration in the form of an introductory statement of *Paschimodayam* was as follows: “It is amazing that light shines not only from the East, but from the West as well. Because Kerala has been placed under the control of the English people, a bridge was installed for the arrival of many things from the West, till then unknown in this land. Besides the knowledge and science prevalent here, there are many things in the West. Both have differences as well. The wisdom of the Hindus has been achieved through the meditation on the fundamentals such as *Paramatma* and *Jivatma*, and this has been narrated very briefly through four-line verses to the benefit of the people who are knowledgeable. However the Western sign of wisdom is based on the careful analysis of the prime cause of time, place and situation and presented in prose for the benefit of children. Those who are interested in reading the latter, we will take relevant matters from the Western science and write them in a language suitable for the Malayalees, as shown in this, and also print them as well as send them to those who need them. Price is half-a-Rupee for one year¹⁸.”

“The content of *Paschimodayam* can be categorized into astronomy, geography, Kerala history and travelogue¹⁹. There was really a conscious attempt to make people of Kerala aware of Western scientific knowledge behind them²⁰.” From this it is evident that the objective of *Paschimodayam* was knowledge dissemination. Briefly stated, *Rajyasamacharam* published news regarding Christian missionary activities; whereas *Paschimodayam* focused on the propagation of Western scientific knowledge. But the kind of news, reports and news analysis which are

found in today's newspapers first appeared in *Jnananikshepam*²¹. Probably based on this fact, Puthupally Raghavan arrived at the following conclusion: “*Rajyasamacharam*, *Paschimodayam* and *Jnananikshepam* and *Vidyasamgraham* were all magazines, run by Christian priests. Their main purpose was propagation of Christian faith. But among these *Jnananikshepam* contained news of the secular kind²².” This is mentioned here not only to point out that, in the book ‘The History of Journalism in Kerala’, authored by Puthupally Raghavan and published by Kerala Sahitya Academy, the author had indicated *Jnananikshepam* as the first periodical to provide news, but also to discriminate between truth and half truths in the inferences regarding the first periodicals in Kerala. The first periodicals were monthlies, while *Vidyasamgraham* was a quarterly. That all these four journals were managed by Christian priests gives the impression of a general statement. Even though all four magazines had Christian missionaries behind them, all four of them cannot be considered under the label of ‘Christian magazines’. At least, *Vidyasamgraham* does not come under that label at all.

Vidyasamgraham was a quarterly magazine published from CMS College, Kottayam, following the model of Academic Journals brought out by Western Universities²³. The statement that these magazines were mainly aimed at propagation of Christian religion is a half-truth, valid only in the case of *Rajyasamacharam*. A quick perusal of the contents of *Paschimodayam*, *Jnananikshepam* and *Vidyasamgraham* would reveal, without any doubt, that their main objective was enhancement of knowledge. However, it could be conceded that propagation of Christian ideas of the Protestant persuasion did sometimes take place. But they were exceptions. And not at all the main aim of the journals. And the opinion that, among the magazines, only *Jnananikshepam* included news of a secular kind is also far from the truth. *Rajyasamacharam* did contain news

about Christian missionary activities, as well as regarding other happenings and events in the world over. In certain volumes the latter information was given under the headline ‘News’. (For example, Vol.I No.III, January 1865; Vol.1 No.IV, April 1865). As far as *Jnananikshepam* was concerned, the news was not limited to just a few stories. Giving prime importance to news, it covered international, national and regional happenings, even though they were not so segregated under different headlines. This implies that a reader could obtain news with a global perspective. But in one volume at least, news were segregated as international and national²⁴.” At a time when there were no other newspapers or magazines, *Jnananikshepam* was not only the journal of the people, but the Gazette of the King as well. It published the different matters of social life of people and articles regarding modern science along with breaking of news and news flashes. Matters related to Christianity were also published as supplementary information along with the other main stories.

Following is the motto defining the vision and mission of *Jnananikshepam* printed on it right from the first number of the first volume, which persisted for quite some time.

“That which cannot be eliminated by a king

That which cannot be robbed by a thief.

That which will not be a burden during travel

That which increases more, the more it is shared.

The wealth of knowledge is the most important value above all.”

These catch phrases represented an ideal which *Jnananikshepam* yearned to attain. The wealth of knowledge is an invaluable storehouse of wisdom. The knowledge and

experiences obtained while interacting with the circumstances in which one lives makes him a wise man. Therefore modern scientific information to obtain knowledge and news stories to acquire lessons in experience were included in *Jnananikshepam*. Thus *Jnananikshepam* became a repository of news and knowledge fulfilling the responsibilities of today's newspapers and magazines together in one periodical. In the introduction to the first volume of *Jnananikshepam* answers to the questions what and why *Jnananikshepam* was very clearly stated. And it is as follows:

“*Jnananikshepam* will be printed in the printing press at Kottayam and will be published every month. The motive behind this venture is to provide knowledge in many matters that are beneficial and interesting. It contains news of the nation and other countries, as well as information regarding properties in the regions and people living there including their customs. Certain information regarding birds, animals and agriculture, inanimate things, customs of the state of Travancore as well as records from the administration also formed part of the content of the magazine. News about Christianity, medicine and home life would also find a place in the magazine. All those who like our offerings in the magazine are requested to purchase a copy and also talk about it to their friends and acquaintances²⁵.”

There were many people who liked the magazine. Not only the populace, but it was appreciated even by the king of Travancore. By the time the sixth issue found the light of the day, the circulation of *Jnananikshepam* had increased considerably. As this was a welcome news to the readers, they were also informed about it in the following manner.

“Our readers would be glad to know that the honourable king, who was interested in all matters which brings benefits to the people and also looks upon all the attempts made to increase

the knowledge of such activities, was greatly pleased with the magazine. Since the number of pages has to be increased, it has become necessary to include the price of the added pages in the printing cost²⁶.”

Thus the first news magazine, printed in Kerala, *Jnananikshepam*, by disseminating greatly useful news and knowledge among the people became the shining light tower in the history of Malayalam journalism. All the scholars who have done serious research in the history of Malayalam journalism have recognised and accepted it. In this context, the views of Sri. G. Priyadarsan who had carried out praiseworthy study regarding the beginnings of Malayalam journalism may be quoted here.

“Along with the functional objective of the two previous publications (*Rajyasamacharam* and *Paschimodayam*), a much wider purpose of circulating all knowledge had emerged with the arrival of *Jnananikshepam*... The credit for first printing local news reports and foreign news stories goes to it. The status of being the first Malayalam periodical to have been printed on a printing machine also goes to *Jnananikshepam*. One may quite appropriately and with pride refer to this magazine as the guide in the history of Malayalam journalism. It is also the oldest Malayalam publication that has been circulated all these years²⁷.”

Notes

- 1 Five hundred Years of Printing, p.17, 18, Faber & Faber, London, 1859.
- 2 The historians have reached the conclusion that the first book was printed in 1578, at Kollam, in 1579 at Kochi. *First Printing in India and Kerala* by Govi K.M., Kerala Sahitya Academy, Thrissur, 1998. p.33.
- 3 Even though newspaper is considered to be a daily, but earlier newspapers were published as and when news became available. From there the newspapers became monthlies, fortnightly and weeklies. The daily is the last stage in this process.

- 4 R. Radhakrishnan, *The Story of the Press in Kerala: The Quest of Kerala* Vol.I, Accent Publications, Trivandrum, p.158.
- 5 V.T. Daniel, *History of Trivandrum-Cochin Anglican Church*, CMS Press, Kottayam, p.56.
- 6 Dr. N. Sam writes about *Paschimataraka* from Western Star Press. Thus *Paschimataraka* was published in 1865 from the same press. 'Keralathile Samuhika Navothanavum Sahityavum', National Book Stall, Kottayam, 1998, p.98.
- 7 *History of Journalism in Kerala* (Kerala Pathra Pravarthana Charitram), Kerala Sahitya Academy, Thrissur, 1985, p.60
- 8 *Kerala Sahitya Charitram* Vol. 4, Publication Division, Kerala University, Thiruvananthapuram, July 1974, p.285.
- 9 *Bhasha Gadyasahitya Charitram* (History of Prose Literature), National Book Stall, Kottayam, 2nd ed., 1964, p.532-33.
- 10 In order to know the first year of publishing it will be incorrect if 14 years are subtracted from 1878.
- 11 *Kerala Pathra Pravarthana Charitram* (History of Journalism in Kerala), p.61
- 12 Kalloor Ummen Philippos, Prof. M.K. Cherian Kozhuvalloor, Vidarthimitram Book Depot, 1971, p.47-48.
- 13 Visakhadasan 'Achadiyantram' (Printing Machine).
- 14 Puthuppally Raghavan, *Kerala Pathra Pravarthana Charitram* (History of Journalism in Kerala), Kerala Sahitya Academy, Thrissur, 1985, p.9, 10.
- 15 'What was epoch making in Gutenberg's process was the possibility of editing, and correcting a text, which was identical in every copy.' *Five Hundres Years of Printing* by S.H. Steinberg, Faber and Faber, 1959, p.24.
- 16 Dr. Vallikav Mohandas, 'Rajyasamacharam', Study, Department of Cultural Publication, Govt. of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram, 1998.
- 17 Dr. N. Sam, *Social Renaissance and Literature in Kerala*, National Book Stall, Kottayam, 1998, p.159.
- 18 K.P. Vareed, *Dr. Herman Gundert*, National Book Stall, Kottayam, 1973, p.94.
- 19 Chummar Choondal, *The Missionaries of Malayalam Journalism*, Minerva Books, Trichur, 1975, p.119.
- 20 Dr. N. Sam, *op. cit.* p.162.
- 21 *Ibid*, p.164.
- 22 Puthuppally Raghavan, *op.cit.* p.59.
- 23 A Self-description of Vidhyasamgraham, "A quarterly College Magazine. A Miscellany of General instruction and information." Chief among the people

behind the publication was Richard Collins, More a College Principal than a priest. Also as a man of Dictionary.

- 24 *Jnananikshepam*, January 1860.
- 25 *Ibid*, 1948 Vrishchikam, p.1.
- 26 *Ibid*, 1949 Edavam 7, p.48.
- 27 *Malayalam Pathrapravarthanam, Praramba Swarupam*, Kerala Sahitya Society, Thrissur, 1952, p.31-32.

II

JNANANIKSHEPAM AND THE EDITORS

Jnananikshepam (The Treasury of Knowledge) is arguably the most significant news magazine in the history of Malayalam journalism. This was the third periodical and the first news magazine published from Kerala.

The magazine that was printed and published from the CMS Press, which was established by Benjamin Bailey in 1821, and which is also being published now is *Jnananikshepam*. Generally it was believed that this news magazine was begun by Benjamin Bailey and that he was its first editor. Benjamin Bailey's press was reputed for extraordinary and invaluable activities related to empowerment of language and literature. And since *Jnananikshepam* was printed and published by this press, it was assumed that Bailey was the founder editor of the news magazine. And this assumption was accepted as true by the general public.

In connection with the 125th year Jubilee celebration of *Jnananikshepam*, a '*Jnananikshepam*-Bailey Jubilee Souvenir' was published in 1973. It was subtitled as 'A Publication associated with the Jubilee celebration of *Jnananikshepam* which began publication 125 years ago'. In the introductory remarks of this commemoration volume, the following was recorded:

"Who gave birth to this news magazine? That is a subject for research. We can only make the inference that the progenitor of

the periodical would be missionaries, who had made invaluable contributions and provided yeoman service to the growth of Malayalam language. The person who was responsible for the birth of *Jnananikshepam* on the 1st of Vrischikam (November) 1848 would have been the founder of the press Benjamin Bailey¹, as it was printed and published from CMS Press.

On (November 30th 1973) the second day of the celebrations of *Jnananikshepam* – Bailey Jubilee, a symposium was held. One of the papers presented in it was on 'Bailey and Journalism' by Sri. V. Karunakaran Nambiar. It was Nambiar's firm belief that one of the initiators of Malayalam journalism and the originator of *Jnananikshepam* was Benjamin Bailey that had prompted the man who presented the dissertation and the organisers to adopt such a topic for the symposium.

Historians of literature and journalism have generally held the view that Benjamin Bailey was the founder Editor of *Jnananikshepam*. But the study based on the primary source of evidence had brought to light the fact that the earlier opinion assigning the role of founder editor to Benjamin Bailey was not correct. This study analyses the nature and content in its introduction, and after elaborating the opinion, discusses its lack of logic and finally affirms the conclusion that another CMS missionary, named John Hawksworth was the founder editor of *Jnananikshepam*.

Jnananikshepam – Nature and Content

The first issue of *Jnananikshepam* was published on the first of Vrischika month 1848. It was priced at one (old copper) coin per copy in Demmy 1/8 size. It boasted of 8 pages. The pages were increased to 10 from the month of 'Kanni' (September-October) 1855 for most of the issues. This included two pages which were not numbered. These supplementary pages carried

pictures and articles which had relevance to the pictures.

Modern printing technology using movable types has facilities for designing the layout of the pages and varied utilisation of the types. Right from the beginning, *Jnananikshepam* made commendable use of both these facilities. On the top of the first page of *Jnananikshepam* the following information was printed in an exemplary manner: the volume number, price, the English translation of *Jnananikshepam*, 'The Treasury of Knowledge', the title in Malayalam '*Jnananikshepam*', the details of the symmetrically balanced layout style² and so on. The printing was made more appealing by using different points for the font, such as 10 pt, 12 pt, 14 pt and 18 pt for the beginning and the inside pages.

The English-Malayalam monthly numbers were included from the month of 'Kanni' 1849 as well as the foot measure code from Makaram 1850 (Jan – Feb). These have been tabulated and printed utilising 1½ pt sized rules as were necessary. And all these were supplemented by pictures as mentioned earlier. Thus *Jnananikshepam* utilised the possibilities available in graphic arts making the printing attractive.

The composition was carried out in single column having a length of 44m and a width of 24m. Headlines were composed in 14 pts and the text in 12 pts. But in issue No.42 of the month of 'Medam' (April-May) 10 pt was used for the composition of the text. This was based on the awareness that 'more could be printed in less space'. In order to obtain smaller points, smaller types were specially cast for the purpose. Later *Jnananikshepam* had published issues which made use of 10 pts for about three and half pages of the total eight pages and these boasted of better space utilisation and a big increase in contents³.

The employees of *Jnananikshepam* had a very clear perception of its aim and contents. These were explained in the very first

introduction to the journal and this could be abridged as follows: The aim of the magazine is to disseminate knowledge regarding matters that are interesting as well as advantageous to life and living. National and international news will be published in this journal. The geographical characteristics of different parts of the land, history, natural resources, rituals and behavioural manners, flora and fauna – all these will be described in the publication. The rites and rituals of Travancore along with their copies will be serially included. So will be particulars of Christianity, medicine, astrology and other subjects. An examination of the aim and contents of each issue of *Jnananikshepam* will provide clear evidence that the journal was faithful to the purpose it had adopted right from the beginning.

Suspension and Commencement

The magazine *Jnananikshepam* which began publication from CMS Press, Kottayam on the first of the month of Vrischika 1848. The same press had published *Jnananikshepam* in the previous months as well. However this does not imply that this magazine was continuously published without break from 1848 onwards. There were hindrances in publication in between. Moreover the aim of the magazine when it began in 1848 and the style it had adopted in the presentation of contents did not exist anymore. Since the purpose of publishing the magazine had been altered, changes have occurred in the style of its contents accordingly. Now *Jnananikshepam* is the official organ of the Middle Kerala Great Parish of the CSI Church.

However the truth that the publication of *Jnananikshepam* was suspended for some time and its revival began again with altogether different objectives from January 1898 remains. This is evident from the reference made in the article 'The Rev. Benjamin Bailey & the Kottayam CMS Press' written by Sri. John Chandy, who was the superintendent of the CMS Press, in

Kerala Society Papers. He says: “It was stopped about 1870, but was revived by the present writer as a magazine in which form it still survives⁴.”

Another testimony regarding the reappearance of *Jnananikshepam* are the details published later in the magazine itself. Even though one or two issues did not see the light of the day now and then, the re-commencement of the publication of the journal, which had stopped publication for a longer period, was from January 1898. Venerable Archdeacon T.K. Benjamin, who was the editor of *Jnananikshepam* for a long time from 1898, has this to say about the circumstances of the re-introduction: “Mr. John Chandy, who was the Superintendent of CMS Press had expressed the view that it would be beneficial to our employer to begin a magazine. This opinion was welcomed by the Press Committee, who also took upon itself the responsibility for implementation⁵.”

However when *Jnananikshepam* was revived from January 1898, the people who were working behind to bring it out were not at all aware that their magazine was the continuation of the same *Jnananikshepam*, which was published from Vrischika 1848 and that it was also the third journal to be published in Malayalam. Therefore as far as they were concerned, *Jnananikshepam* commenced publication in January 1898. In keeping with this line of thought, when the Journal actually completed 100 years in 1947, a 50th year Jubilee special edition was printed and published and a 50th year anniversary was celebrated. Thus whether it was by design or in ignorance, a commendable period of history and tradition, a half century of remarkable journalism, was disowned by the people behind *Jnananikshepam* as not belonging to them⁶.”

The Bishop of CSI Middle Kerala Great Parish, Rt. Rev. C.K. Jacob in his letter to the Jubilee special edition of 1947 and the

Editor, Archdeacon T.K. Benjamin, in his editorial confirm the view that *Jnananikshepam* was first published in January 1898.

Rev. C.K. Jacob wrote as follows: “Half a century is indeed a long period. The present generation cannot also easily grasp the realities before 50 years. Printing presses, or Malayalam publications, dailies or weeklies, or Christian magazines were all rare during that period – It was then that *Jnananikshepam* commenced publication⁷.”

Archdeacon T.K. Benjamin’s statement in the editorial was quite forthright. “The first issue of *Jnananikshepam* was published in January 1898. This month fifty years of publication is complete. Therefore this issue is published as a Jubilee volume⁸.”

Some researchers have pointed out the midway suspension of the publication of *Jnananikshepam*. “Although now and then disappearing to appear again, even completely changing its form and looks, the one and only Journal that has survived so long⁹.” “It was adversely affected for a period and thereafter it had continued for over thirty years¹⁰.” “The Church Mission Society was publishing a journal with the name ‘*Jnananikshepam*’ from Kottayam from 1848 to 1867¹¹.” “It is not certain how long *Jnananikshepam* was published continually. But its publication was suspended for a number of years and the magazine was finally revived in 1897¹².” “*Jnananikshepam* is the only journal that was being published without a break since the last 125 years¹³.” “It stopped in 1870, John Chandy revived it in 1897¹⁴.” “The journal stopped publication in 1892; but recommenced it in 1898¹⁵.”

These are some of the research findings on the suspension of *Jnananikshepam*.

There is no uniform view regarding the year of suspension

of publication of *Jnananikshepam*. The year is 1867 according to Dr. P.J. Thomas and Ulloor S. Parameswara Iyer. But in the view of John Chandy and Dr. Scaria Scaria, it is 1870 and in the opinion of Dr. N. Sam the year is 1892.

All the issues of *Jnananikshepam* from the first one to the issue of December 1860, are preserved in CMS Press, Kottayam. This is the only copy available of this period.

The October issue of 1860 was, in fact, lost. The last page number of the magazine of September 1860 is 72 and the first page number of the November issue, 1860 was 82. From this it is evident that there was an issue having pages 73-81 between them. The 9-paged issue was of October. The 9 number is also the number of pages of the November issue.

However between the period from 1861 to Jan. 1898, it is difficult to ascertain the exact number of issues of *Jnananikshepam* which were published or which of them found the light of the day. Because copies of these issues are now not available.

But there is evidence that during this period under reference, one or the other issues of *Jnananikshepam* was published. In one of the volumes of the archives at the British Library on South Indian Missions, there is some information regarding *Jnananikshepam*: “*Treasury of Knowledge*, Number 17, December 1874, English and Tamil, printed at Church Mission Press, Kottayam 1874. English article regarding Syrian Church of Malabar (in Tamil)¹⁶.” The lack of sufficient knowledge of The Catalogues regarding South Indian languages could have been the reason behind the language references as “English and Tamil”. From the indications of printing done in CMS Press, Kottayam and of having an article on Malabar (Malankara) Syrian Church, it may be concluded that the allusion is to one

of the issues of *Jnananikshepam* printed and published by CMS Press.

There is a remark about *Jnananikshepam* in the book, ‘The Decline of Nair Dominance’ by Dr. Robin Jeffrey. T.C. Punnen, the first Malayalee to complete education in Britain, applied for employment in the Government of Travancore. But his application was rejected. From this action, the reluctance of the Government to provide Government jobs to any other than caste Hindus became evident. Jeffrey writes that *Jnananikshepam* published from Kottayam alluded to this case to complain that “there was no one to intervene on behalf of the Syrian Christians, who are strong willed and present their petition to the merciful king.” And this was injustice shown to educated Syrian Christians. But in which issue of *Jnananikshepam* this complaint was raised was not recorded. However, in the footnote, Robin Jeffrey had indicated that in the Report on Native Newspapers, Madras this case was mentioned as being reported by the journal, ‘Paschimataraka – Kerala Pathaka dated 14th September, 1876’.

Similarly, in the report (Madras Church Missionary Register, 1876) regarding a Tamil Brahmin receiving baptism, it was stated that the concerned Brahmin was a subscriber of the Malayalam magazine edited by Baker (Henry Baker Junior).

On the basis of these testimonies, it can be inferred that *Jnananikshepam* was published in 1876 as well.

And on the basis of these facts, the views of Dr. P.J. Thomas and Ulloor regarding the suspension of *Jnananikshepam* in 1867 and the opinions of John Chandy and Dr. Scaria Sacaria and others as suspension happening in 1870 have no validity. Even though Dr. N. Sam has recorded it as occurring in 1892, he has not provided any authentic documents to validate his claim. Due to these reasons, there is no way one can decide on the exact date from which *Jnananikshepami* stopped publication. One can only

reach the inference that the publication of *Jnananikshepam* was stopped for a long period much before the journal could make a new beginning in January 1898.

Benjamin Bailey, the Editor – a Repeatedly Confirmed Falsehood

A group of writers who were scholars and researchers, through their articles in '*Jnananikshepam-Bailey Souvenir (1973)*', established that *Jnananikshepam* magazine was one of the enduring contributions of Benjamin Bailey given to Malayalam. They also confirmed that he was the first editor of the Journal. The books scripted on the history of Malayalam Journalism and many articles in periodicals underlined and italicised this assumption as true.

Dr. K.M. George wrote: "*Jnananikshepam*, which did pioneering service as a vehicle of knowledge for 125 years continuously, has created history in the field of journalism. The lifeline of the magazine in its initial years was none other than Benjamin Bailey himself".¹⁷

In the Souvenir mentioned above, Professor Abraham Pambadi wrote an article, 'Benjamin Bailey, a Symbol of Industriousness', in which he had said: "Now *Jnananikshepam* publication began by Benjamin Bailey is celebrating its 125th anniversary¹⁸." Prof. Pambadi had, in the same article, asserted his view quite strongly that "He (Benjamin Bailey) started the publication with the aim of achieving all-round progress of Christians¹⁹."

G. Priyadarsan, who had conducted studies on the nature of Malayalam journalism, had also linked *Jnananikshepam* with Benjamin Bailey. "The history of journalism is hardly 125 years old. It was the energetic Christian missionaries such as Herman Gundert and Benjamin Bailey who sowed the seeds of journalism

in Malayalam²⁰." He also alludes to Bailey as the initiator of this magazine²¹. It was difficult to distinguish who all were the chief workers, who operated behind this news magazine, began by Benjamin Bailey. The great poet Ulloor records in 'The History of Kerala Literature' that the main people behind the magazine were Rev. George Mathen and Archdeacon Koshy. This was probably from the second stage (from Medam 1856) onwards. One thing is very clear. Kottayam is the birth place of Malayalam printing and Malayalam journalism. These two movements have been the source of strength and support for the social, cultural and political transformation that has occurred recently in the land of Malayalam. And Benjamin Bailey was the guide to both these movements²²."

Prof. M.K. Cherian Kozhuvallur discovered the first volume of *Jnananikshepam*. He wrote the following in the Malayala Manorama annual edition in 1973: "Bailey reached Kerala in November, 1848. In the same month *Jnananikshepam* magazine began publication from CMS Press, Kottayam. This magazine which is being published without any hindrance even today enhances the reputation of Bailey²³." Although Prof. M.K. Cherian asserts this with considerable emphasis, he later entertained some doubts in the matter. But he does not deviate from his above expressed opinion. In 1981 he recorded the following; "Who gave birth to this highly commendable news magazine? It is a subject that deserves serious research. But one thing is certain. It can only be the Western missionaries, who provided leadership to the growth of Malayalam prose literature. It must be the great Bailey himself, who built a printing machine using wood, that published such a news magazine from the same press²⁴."

Ulloor S. Parameswara Iyer had not linked Benjamin Bailey to *Jnananikshepam*. But he makes rather unclear statement that Dr. Koshy was its publisher. "The Church Mission Society

has started the publication of a news journal having the title of *Jnananikshepam*. That is the first newspaper from Kerala. It contains a summary of current world news, matters related to religion and society, the improper practice of the Syrian Church, criticism of the religious teachings of the Roman Catholics and others. The main person involved (Archdeacon Koshy) has also criticised the Hindu religion. The result of that attempt is 'Pullelikunchu'. *Jnananikshepam* was circulated till 1042. Dr. Koshy himself was its publisher for many years²⁵." But from this statement of Ulloor it is not clear whether Dr. Koshy started the publication and during which period Koshy was its publisher. "Before this, the magazine had published 36 issues. The European who had worked here for several years is now going to his own country²⁶." The last sentence indicates that the editor of the 86 issues was a White man and not a local person.

T.M. Chummar has written the following about the employees of *Jnananikshepam*. It is not certain for how long *Jnananikshepam* was published continuously. It is learned that the magazine had suspended publication for several years and that it was revived in the end from 1877. The main employees of the magazine in the initial years were Geevarghese, the priest and Archdeacon Koshy.

The lack of clarity seen in the opinion of Ulloor is also perceived in the statement of T.M. Chummar. The statement that Geevarghese Achan and Archdeacon Koshy were the chief employees of *Jnananikshepam* in its initial years is too general a comment. From this it cannot be logically concluded that these two were the most responsible employees of *Jnananikshepam*. The comment of G. Priyadarsan, given elsewhere in this work, that Rev. George Mathen and Archdeacon Koshy were the main employees possibly from the second stage has to be also considered in this context.

However, R. Radhakrishnan, the author of 'The Story of the Press in Kerala' provides a view on the founding of *Jnananikshepam* and its first editor, altogether different from the common thinking on the subject.

R. Radhakrishnan's views are as follows: "The first volume of the first magazine of the Travancore region, *Jnananikshepam* (Treasure of Knowledge) was published from Kottayam under the auspices of CMS Mission in November 1848. Although one of its objectives was to propagate religion, space was set apart for regional news and some outdated international news, which had appeared in the British Press some time earlier. This magazine also provided encouragement for the enhancement of the literal activities of the people. During the first half of the 18th century a mega story 'Pullelikuju' was published in it as a serial. In the order of one issue per month, 86 volumes were brought out till 1855. From January 1856, volume numbers were given to the magazine. It is given to understand that this magazine was started in 1848 as a commemoration volume of the Jubilee for founding the CMS Mission in England. Till 1856, a missionary named John Hawksworth was its editor. He printed this magazine in the beautiful 14 pt type in the CMS Press. The price of the magazine was one chakram (copper coin).

There were editorial changes in the magazine after Hawksworth. More pages were added and more photographs were printed. The magazine made use of printing blocks taken from pencil sketches. Another 24 volumes more were published till 1857. But volume number was missing from the volume of January 1858. On the coverage of that volume a picture of the then Travancore king, Ayilyam Thirunal was published.

Therefore on the basis of historical details available so far, one can conclude that the publication of the magazine had stopped before 1882. But the magazine was revived in 1898

from Kottayam.”²⁷

R. Radhakrishnan provides only relevant details regarding *Jnananikshepam*, that too in quite an abridged form.

Nevertheless R. Radhakrishnan points two important matters related to the editor of *Jnananikshepam*. These are:

- i) John Hawksworth, a missionary, was its editor up to 1856.
- ii) After Hawksworth editorial changes were carried out in the magazine.

Even though Radhakrishnan had asserted that John Hawksworth was the editor of *Jnananikshepam* till 1856, he has not provided the details of his reasoning or evidence that led him to this conclusion. Moreover Radhakrishnan alludes to editorial change after the time of Hawksworth, he does not indicate who became the editor after Hawksworth.

Even though Radhakrishnan was unsuccessful in providing collateral reasoning and evidence for his assertion of John Hawksworth being the editor, the authors of this book have collected ample evidence from their research to conclusively establish that John Hawksworth was indeed the editor of *Jnananikshepam*. Moreover, several facts have been discovered to reach the conclusion that it was not possible for a person like Benjamin Bailey to assume the editorship of such a magazine as *Jnananikshepam* in 1848 or at a time close to it.

Following matters as evidence elaborate two things:

- i) Benjamin Bailey was not the founder-editor of *Jnananikshepam*.
- ii) John Hockworth was the first editor of *Jnananikshepam*.
 - i) In order to prove that Benjamin Bailey was not the editor of *Jnananikshepam*, the most strong evidence unearthed is the news carried by *Jnananikshepam* itself in its 18th volume,

month Medam 1850. It is the news about the return of Bailey to England. The news reads as follows:

“Rev. Benjamin Bailey who had lived in Kottayam for a long period has returned to his country by ship from Kochi in the month of Meenam. The European came from England in 991 (Malayalam year). He was working in the Church Mission at Kottayam from the Malayalam year 1005 to 1010, excluding 4 years in between. The details regarding the work he had carried out will be published in the next issues.”

If Benjamin Bailey was either responsible for *Jnananikshepam* or its editor, the same information would have been mentioned in the news item. In the introduction to the volume I, Makaram 1856, of the magazine it is mentioned that 86 volumes of the magazine have been published earlier. The White man who wrote this is returning to his land after many years working hard in this country.” Reading these two news items together, it becomes certain that Benjamin Bailey was not the editor of *Jnananikshepam*.

When Benjamin Bailey returned to his country in 1850, the responsibility of the Press was taken over by Henry Baker Sr. This information is reported in ‘Madras Church Missionary Record’²⁸. The monthly publication of *Jnananikshepam* also required continuous working and supervision, just as the matter of the Press. If Benjamin Bailey were the editor, the responsibility of the magazine also would be transferred along with the responsibility of the Press. But in this context there is nothing available regarding the transfer of *Jnananikshepam*.

A homily given by Henry Baker Senior in the Cathedral on the occasion of an ordination ceremony had become a part of the history of the Kottayam Mission. Baker had spoken of Bailey’s important work in the mission in the following manner: “He translated the complete Bible into the regional language. He

also translated prayers, tracts and homilies along with the Bible. He scripted two dictionaries, one from English to Malayalam and the other, Malayalam to English. He established a printing press and made types. He printed his own compositions and the literary works of others in that Press. He built the church, which we use today for service. Besides all these, he also constructed several houses and mission buildings. He did all these without anyway showing negligence to the fulfilment of his role in the Mission Centre and its duties” (Madras Church Missionary Record, December, 1889).

Jnananikshepam was the one and only news magazine published from Travancore. It was also the Gazette of the King. Considering these two perspectives of the magazine, *Jnananikshepam* had considerable importance and hence one of the chief contributions of the Kottayam Mission. Taking these considerations into account, Henry Baker would have clearly pointed out, if Benjamin Bailey was the founder-editor of *Jnananikshepam*. Because it would then have been included among the significant contributions of Bailey enumerated by Baker Senior.

The article ‘Benjamin Bailey and the CMS Press’ written by Sri. John Chandy and published in Kerala Society Papers was a scholarly composition. It had also described the contribution made by Benjamin Bailey. “Rev. Benjamin Bailey was an outstanding personality. He began English language education in middle Travancore by teaching English in the Syrian Seminary at Kottayam. He also built a printing machine out of wood. He also made Malayalam typefaces, on the basis of information available in the Encyclopaedia, with the help of local goldsmiths. He made a complete translation of catechism text and common prayer into Malayalam. He provided the initiative for building two sets of Malayalam letters in England and also to print the Gospels in Malayalam by utilising those

letters. Bailey and son together did its composition and brought those letters to Kerala. The moulds which were designed in England are still used. He also scripted dictionaries from English to Malayalam and Malayalam to English. He built a beautiful church at Kottayam in Gothic style. It was his wont to publish either a news journal or a magazine from the Press. Six years before this writer was born, in November 1848, *Jnananikshepam* (Treasury of Knowledge) was published for the first time from the press. It was the first news journal in Malayalam. The pencil sketches drawn by Mrs. Henry Baker Junior were carried by the first volume of *Jnananikshepam*. Therefore it was the first newspaper with pictures. It was the one and only news journal in Kerala for a long time. But by 1870 its publication had been suspended. The credit for reviving it in the present format of publication belongs to the writer. Later Mr. W.H. Moore had published an English magazine named ‘Travancore Herald’ as well a Malayalam supplement, ‘Sandishtavadi’ to it from CMS Press. The Diocesan Digest edited by Rev. Richard Collins also came out this press.”

Shri. John Chandy was the superintendent of CMS Press for over two decades. As a person who had edited several Malayalam journals such as *Malayala Mitram* and others, he had demonstrated great zeal for historical research. He was also highly knowledgeable in the history and operations of CMS Press in Travancore and Kochi. Such an individual as John Chandy would have known if John Bailey was the founder of *Jnananikshepam*. He would also have recorded it as a major contribution of Bailey in his above cited historical study in the form of an article that enumerates the contributions of Bailey to Malayalam. Just as *Travancore Herald*, *Sandhishtavadi*, *Vidya Samgraham* and *Diocesan Digest* were printed at CMS Press, later, *Jnananikshepam* was also printed at the same press. This is the truth.

Benjamin Bailey ended his missionary society services and returned to England on March 13, 1850. Just before his departure, his 'A Dictionary, Malayalam and English' was published in November 1849. Three years earlier in July 1846, Bailey had published 'A Dictionary of High and Colloquial Malayalam and English'. In this book, he wrote the following about the English-Malayalam Dictionary, which he was going to publish.

"There still remains another desideratum to which the attention of the author has been drawn, viz. an English and Malayalam Dictionary to accompany the present work. He has prepared sufficient materials to commence printing such a work and should his life be spared, he hopes to publish it, provided he meet with sufficient encouragement to do so."

The printing of the English-Malayalam Dictionary which was getting ready in 1846 would have taken at least three more years to go to the press and this did involve a great deal of responsibility. Therefore it does not stand to reason to conclude that just one year before (November 1848) the publication of the dictionary, Bailey would have undertaken the responsibility of publishing a journal as well. In November 1848 and thereafter Bailey would have been fully immersed in the works related to bringing out the dictionary.

Moreover towards the end of 1848 Bailey was seriously considering retirement and return to his own homeland. But he had not uttered a word about this to any of his co-workers or members of the Church, who he had loved very dearly.²⁹ Nevertheless, it could be inferred from a note prepared on the occasion of the second metropolitan visitation of the Bishop of Calcutta to Kottayam Village Mission in December 1848³⁰. The return was delayed for one more year. The reason behind the delay would have been his ardent desire to publish the English-

Malayalam Dictionary, if time permitted him to do so. Three months after the publication of the Dictionary, Bailey returned to England. Therefore, as John Tucker points out³¹, "Bailey, who acts only after serious deliberation, would not have attempted to start a magazine, which needs to be begun with order and discipline, particularly when the time at his disposal was limited. To put it briefly, Bailey was not the editor of *Jnananikshepam*. And his contributions were not in the arena of journalism, either. They were in the fields of Malayalam printing, books publication and translation. The invaluable service Bailey had rendered in these matters in Kerala cannot either be forgotten or dispensed with."

John Hawksworth – the Founder Editor

Continuous numbers in a series had been allotted to the eighty six volumes of *Jnananikshepam* from Vrischikam 1848 to Dhanu 1855. But new numbers have been given from Makaram (January) 1856. "In the introduction to this volume with new number provides the clarification for the change that has taken place with the assumption of a new editor. This note also gives an evaluation of the first editor till then³²."

The introductory note in the first volume of Makaram 1856 reads as follows:

"New times have begun for us. What is going to happen in the next twelve months is known only to God. So far 86 volumes for this journal have been published. The Westerner who wrote and had spent many years working for it is now returning to his own country. He has taught and written in *Jnananikshepam* that man's refuge and salvation is found only in Christ. The truth founded on the promises that God's word will not be without results leads us to the eternal life; if not it will turn out to be the adverse witness on the day of judgement. The effort he has

put in the 86 volumes may have helped some sinners to find the true path of life. It may also have provided solace to Christians who have been dejected in mind. May your heavenly father save many souls through these small paper sheets.”

“86 volumes of this journal have been published already by this time. The Westerner who wrote them and spent many years working for it is now returning to his own country.” From the second sentence it becomes evident that the previous volumes of *Jnananikshepam* have been scripted by the man who went to England. When the Makaram (January) 1856 issue was under print, the European had not yet gone to his own country, but was making arrangements to depart.

Only once did Benjamin Bailey who reached Travancore in 1816, went on a furlough. It happened in 1933. Thereafter Bailey went to England only in 1850, after his retirement. Briefly stated, the Westerner who returned to his country in 1856 was not Benjamin Bailey.

Thomas Norton was the first CMS missionary in 1816. Thereafter till the publication of *Jnananikshepam* in 1848, there had been a procession of missionaries arriving in Travancore. They were: Benjamin Bailey (1816), T. Dossen (1816), Henry Baker Senior (1817), Joseph Phen (1817), S. Ridsdale (1824), J. Doran (1825), Stephen Lyra (1829), J. Pitt (1833), J. Woodcock (1835), H. Harley (1836), J. Johnson (1837) and J. Harding (1848). Among these, Thomas Norton, Bailey, Dossen, Phen, Ridsdale, Doran, Stephen Lyra, Woodcock, John, T. Norton, William Humphry, Chapman and Harding either returned to England or had left the Travancore mission before 1856. And among those who remained, the missionary who went to England from Travancore in 1856 was John Hawksworth. E.V. John documents in the Brief History of Cambridge Nicholson School that ‘Hawksworth left Thiruvalla on February 3rd, 1856

and went to the West. W.S. Hunt has also recorded that after sixteen years service Hawksworth went to his home country on furlough only once.

John Hawksworth was greatly interested in academic matters. The statement of V.T. David that “the missionary became acquainted with Mister K. Koshy at Mavelikara and had him translate some short books” validate this observation.³³ Moreover, S.W. Hunt also confirms it: “As endorsed by translations of Hawksworth, he was a good scholar and very knowledgeable in the Malayalam language.”³⁴ The opinion of Hunt that the translations of Hawksworth give witness to his expertise in Malayalam language should be read together with the observation, “the European who wrote it in *Jnananikshepam*. Both together reinforce the assertion that John Hawksworth was the editor of *Jnananikshepam*.

In the 245th page of volume 31 of Idavam 1851 of *Jnananikshepam* a composition with the title “Some Questions” has been added. As the title implies, its contents are questions, which raise criticism against social evils. At the end of the questions responses were invited from the readers in this manner: “The answers to the above edited questions are to be sent either to the Press at Kottayam or to Rev. John Hawksworth, residing at Thiruvalla.” This instruction is quite clear. It is quite logical to infer that the answers were to be sent either to the Press or to Hawksworth directly because he was responsible for the magazine, *Jnananikshepam*.

John Hawksworth arrived in Travancore in 1840 and till he departed for England on furlough for the first time in 1856, he had rendered service for sixteen years in Alapuzha, Mavelikara and Thiruvalla. Several of the local news in *Jnananikshepam* were linked to these regions. These news validate the relationship between Hawksworth and *Jnananikshepam*. One of the first

news of this kind appeared in volume no.5 of Meenam in 1849, under the headline 'The colloquium on Books at Mavelikara'. This news was a report regarding the meeting on Books held at Mavelikara school. The report carries details of participants, the programme of meeting, the views of the speakers, decisions arrived at the conference and so on. Hockswroth had gone to Mavelikara on November 25, 1845 from Alapuzha. He continued in Mavelikara till Pete returned in 1848 from his authorised leave.

The main centre of John Hawksworth's operations was Thiruvalla. Several news with a regional orientation published in *Jnananikshepam* was from Thiruvalla.

a) In *Jnananikshepam* volume 9 of the month of Karkadakam () there was a news story with the title 'A good Thahasildar' among other news. It went on like this: "About seven or eight months ago, a Thahasildar, named Kali Pilla obtained transfer on his own request from Mandavathum Vathukkel in Thiruvalla to a place called Kunnathurekku. Everyone was of the view that he was a honest and able official and all of them regarded his transfer as a very unfortunate event." According to the style adopted then it was certified that the news was prepared after verifying it directly.

b) There was a news item with the headline 'Foolish devotion'. "During the days when an epidemic was raging in Thiruvalla and adjacent areas, the priests and the people among the Syrians carried a statue from house to house with the accompaniment of firing. But would the person, responsible for the epidemic, have become fearful of the statue and the shooting? This certainly is not the Christian way of devotion. Because 'If there is anyone among you who is suffering, let him pray.' 'I will listen to those crying to me in the days of misfortune.' Diseases are part of God's design.

These news have been prepared by John Hawksworth, as the editor of *Jnananikshepam*. In a letter written to the secretary of the corresponding committee regarding Thiruvalla District Mission on April 18, 1850, Hawksworth narrates an event which serves as the basis for this news. Moreover, Hawksworth also writes that many Syrians, who read the news story in the small journal we publish as a news magazine, were ashamed of this particular devotional behaviour.

c) The news item regarding an extraordinary birth in the volume of Thulam, 1855, also emanated from Thiruvalla. The news story was: "A woman belonging to Ezhava caste living near Veliyam gave birth to three girls on the first of this month."

An honourable Hindu reader from Kochi had written a letter to *Jnananikshepam* which was published in its volume 70 of Chingam 1854 with the headline 'Pratichyudaya'. The reader had sent his letter to John Hawksworth, who had said that he had not known the writer of the letter. Since the letter was intended to be published in *Jnananikshepam* he had sent it to Hawksworth, who published it in the news magazine. Hawksworth sent the English translation of this letter to the Officiating Secretary as a proof of the wide readership of *Jnananikshepam*, the responses it evokes and the new thoughts it engenders. Hawksworth wrote to the Secretary on 28th July 1854 in the following manner:

"I enclose the sample of a religious article put forth in it, and I also forward a translation of a Malayalam letter, received this month from a very respectable Hindu, in proof that the paper is read and reflected on and generates new thoughts. The writer is personally unknown to me. He does not reside near any of our missions³⁵."

The journals and letters were sent periodically by the missionaries of Church Missionary Society to the Corresponding Committee were actually reports of their activities. In the

letter sent to the officiating secretary. Hawksworth's opinion presented in it about the administration of *Jnananikshepam*, its revenues and expenses, deserves attention. The unit price of *Jnananikshepam* was one 'Chakram' (one copper coin). Hawksworth had reported that "The expenses of this small magazine can be met by this income and it has reached now its volume number 69."³⁶ He had further stated that the success of *Jnananikshepam* could be considered as a motivating factor for commencing similar attempts in all their missions in India. These comments made by Hawksworth validate the view that he was indeed the man responsible for *Jnananikshepam*.

The letter sent to *Jnananikshepam* by a respected Hindu reader which was alluded to above was translated into English by Hawksworth. This translation of the letter was published in the Madras Church Missionary Record in its July-September issue of 1854. Introducing this letter, the editor of the Church Record had given the following note: "Translation of a letter in Malayalam, sent by a respectable Hindu in the Cochin territory to the editor of the Treasury of Knowledge (*Jnananikshepam*)"³⁷. This allusion makes it abundantly clear that the editor of *Jnananikshepam* was indeed John Hawksworth.

The Successors of John Hawksworth

One of the foremost activities of the Church Missionary Society in Kerala was the publication of *Jnananikshepam*. John Hawksworth was of the view that the news magazine was an attractive means to carry out missionary work among members of other religions and had recommended publication of similar magazines in all missions for emulating the shining example of *Jnananikshepam*. The fact is the influence of a newspaper is quite widespread. In the matter of documentation, the missionaries were a breed apart. They had shown great zeal and exactness in maintaining them. Be that as it may, only very little information

is recorded regarding *Jnananikshepam* in the documents of the missionaries. Therefore information regarding editors, other workers, writers and readers of *Jnananikshepam* is indeed scarce.

The founder-editor John Hawksworth returned to England on furlough on February 3rd, 1856. Evidence indicates that after Hawksworth, Henry Baker Junior, Archdeacon Koshy Koshy had performed the duties of the editor for quite a long period. But it is difficult to determine the periods in which these two were the editors.

A Tamil Brahmin hailing from Aluva had received baptism in Kottayam. The event is reported in the Madras Church Missionary Register 1876 in the following manner. "... He (the Tamil Brahmin) was a subscriber to the Malayalam magazine which Mr. Baker edits and had both written to and conversed with Mr. Baker and other missionaries..." The Malayalam magazine under reference here and edited by Baker was *Jnananikshepam*. According to this allusion, Henry Baker Junior was the editor of *Jnananikshepam* in 1876. But there are reasons to infer that Baker was in charge of *Jnananikshepam* only till April-May 1860, even though Baker became the editor of the magazine when Hawksworth went to England in 1856.

The period from Vrischikam 1848 (Dec.) to Dhanu (January) 1855 was a special phase in the history of *Jnananikshepam*. Another phase was from Makaram 1856 to Medam 1860. The volumes published in the first phase were serially numbered from 1 to 86. During this period the years were indicated both in Malayalam year and the year having reference to Christ. But from the 4th volume onwards change was visible in the manner of mentioning the Malayalam months. During this period changes were introduced in the arrangement and style of title page and contents. During the second phase pencil sketches along with news found their way into the magazine. The pencil sketches

were prepared by Mrs. Henry Baker Junior. The subjects of the news given with the sketches enveloped scientific subjects, particularly natural science, technology and medical science and so on. Among the missionaries of 1860s, having links with scientific subjects, the person most close to science was Henry Baker Junior. He was renowned for being a “remarkable natural scientist”.³⁸ On the basis of his deep knowledge in natural science, the Zoological Committee of Britain had honoured Henry Baker Junior with a membership of the Committee.”³⁹ “Even though his studies were complete, Baker was not old enough to become a priest. Therefore he studied medicine for two years and thus became acquainted with the work being done in hospitals. This knowledge and experience turned out to be a great help in his later missionary work and attracted many people to him.”⁴⁰ From the time Hawksworth relieved himself of the editorship till June 1860 *Jnananikshepam* had carried many scientific and technological articles as well as medical articles in the February-March 1860 issues.⁴¹ These compositions were done by Henry Baker Junior. Mrs. Henry Baker Junior provided the pencil sketches for these articles. Ira Daltan has testified that Mrs. Baker had helped her husband to publish *Jnananikshepam* from 1854 onwards⁴². However Ira Daltan was not quite certain about the year. Because from the study of the contents of *Jnananikshepam* it can be learned that Hawksworth entrusted the responsibility of the magazine to Henry Baker Junior at the end 1855. (Hawksworth had left on furlough on February 3, 1856 which implies that, he may have abdicated the responsibility some time before his departure.) As alluded to earlier, the change in content and style of the magazine begins to be observed from this time. A picture was included in the issue of ‘Kanni’ (September) 1855. There is a picture of ‘Light House’. And from the Makaram 1856 issues, pictures were continuously incorporated in *Jnananikshepam*. The Mission Centre of Baker

Junior was in Mundakkayam from 1848. But it can be observed that *Jnananikshepam*, which was his responsibility was published from Kottayam and that Baker was its editor during the period of 1856 and 1876.

Henry Baker Junior went to England on his first furlough on June 22, 1860 and came back to Kerala on September 15, 1862. From the volume of May 1860, *Jnananikshepam* did not carry any picture nor the news item along with it. Moreover, substantial changes in the contents and house style of the magazine. From this it may be inferred that there is a change of editor from 1860. Henry Baker Junior some time after his return to Kerala, could have assumed the mantle of editorship again. That could be why Madras Church Missionary Register records in 1876 that Baker was editing the magazine. This probably happened in 1867. Till 1867 Archdeacon Koshy was the editor.

Archdeacon Koshy had been the editor of *Jnananikshepam* for quite a long time. In the centenary volume of Church Missionary Society, it is recorded that “Koshy had edited *Jnananikshepam*.”⁴³ Further among the biographies of indigenous native clergy, it is mentioned that “Archdeacon Koshy published a journal called *Jnananikshepam* for seven years.”⁴⁴ From these two documents, the conclusion that Archdeacon Koshy was the editor for seven years can be reached. Therefore the assertion that from the time of departure of Baker Junior to England for the first furlough in 1860, Archdeacon Koshy has effectively functioned as the editor of *Jnananikshepam*. During this time Koshy’s literary composition “*Pullelikunju*’ (Caste difference: A discussion) was carried by *Jnananikshepam* in several episodes. The scarcity of articles and at the same time a dire need for them together turned out to be the motivational force to publish *Pullelikunju* in several episodes of the magazine as a serial.

Rev. E.V. John gives witness to the fact that Archdeacon

Koshy was the editor of *Jnananikshepam* till 1867. In a “speech by the Late deacon George Mathen delivered at Kollam⁴⁵”, it was argued that Malayalam language is comparatively less defective and at the same time having many qualities. As a support for this contention, the magazine *Jnananikshepam* edited by Archdeacon was indicated.

Jnananikshepam was without doubt the first news magazine. It was printed at the Press of Kottayam Church Mission and published as a monthly since 1840.⁴⁶ The responsibility of the editor of the magazine fulfilled by Mr. Koshy from Olassa till he was transferred in 1867. “During this period the contents of the journal consisted of international news in a synoptic form and many other news stories related to religion and society. This news magazine also presented opposition to the Roman Church as well as to the controversies regarding improper rituals and customs in the Syrian Church.”⁴⁷

From the volume of April 1860 the decrease in the number of articles as well as their quality was seriously felt. Actually the issue of July 1860 presented the appearance of an emaciated magazine. Another issue filled its columns with the speech made by the Hajur Deputy Superintendent of Police, Sri. Ramarayar and news about him. The main story of the August issue was ‘Pullelikunju’. More news stories were also carried.

Only one more name was known as the editor of *Jnananikshepam* before its publication was suspended. The person is Reverend Ambattu Thoma. He was the eleventh priest belonging to the Anglican Church of Travancore-Kochi. He was born at the house of Ambattu at Kalluppara Anikkad Muranimuri. “He had been the editor of *Jnananikshepam*.”⁴⁸ He died in 1884. It is not known how long he was the editor. The period of his editorship is also unknown.

In the beginning, the main aims of *Jnananikshepam* were

news dissemination and propagation of general knowledge. But when it was born again in 1898, the objective was changed into its usefulness to Church workers. The motto was ‘A magazine for Christian workers’. For almost 50 years from 1898 to 1947 Archdeacon T.K. Benjamin functioned as the editor. After bringing out a special Jubilee edition in January 1947, Benjamin resigned from his job as editor. Reverend C.K. John became the new editor. *Jnananikshepam*, published from 1898 onwards had withdrawn to itself to be the news journal of Anglican Church alone. Therefore it is irrelevant to do an analysis and evaluation of journalism, language and literature based on this viewpoint during this phase of *Jnananikshepam*. Later, when Travancore-Kochi Anglican Church became the Middle Kerala Diocese of the Church of South India, *Jnananikshepam* underwent a metamorphosis to become a parish news letter. Even today it continues as a Church magazine.

The credit for giving concrete shape to the concepts of a newspaper and editor in Malayalam journalism belongs to *Jnananikshepam* alone. The conclusions that can be accepted from this study of pioneering editors of *Jnananikshepam* are as follows:

The perception that Benjamin Bailey was the founder editor of *Jnananikshepam* has to be corrected.

John Hawksworth, who arrived in Kerala before 1848 and performed the responsibilities of a missionary making Thiruvalla his headquarters and then returned on furlough to England in 1856 was the first editor (founder editor) of *Jnananikshepam*.

After Hawksworth, Henry Baker Junior, Archdeacon Koshy, Ambattu Thoma Achan, Archdeacon T.K. Benjamin and Rev. C.K. John have served as the editors of *Jnananikshepam* during different periods of its history.

Notes

- 1 *Jnananikshepam* – Bailey Souvenir, CMS Press, Kottayam, 1973.
- 2 ‘Fundamentally there are but two distinct layout styles – the formal or the symmetrically balanced, and the informal or non-symmetrically balanced.’ Charles J. Felton, *Layout*, p.23.
- 3 *Jnananikshepam* 77, 1855 Meenam.
- 4 Kerala Society Papers (series 4), p.216.
- 5 Editor, *Jnananikshepam* – Jubilee Special ed. No.1, January 1947, Vol.50, p.3.
- 6 In *Jnananikshepam* – Bailey Souvenir (1973) the mistake regarding the year was corrected. But another mistake, i.e., ascribing editorship to Benjamin Bailey was repeated.
- 7 *Jnananikshepam* – Jubilee Special ed. No.1, January 1947, Vol.50, p.2.
- 8 *Ibid.* p.3.
- 9 G. Priyadarsan, *Jnananikshepam- Malayala Title Pradhama Patram* (First Newspaper in Malayalam), *Bhashaposhini* 22, December 1998, p.74.
- 10 V.T. David, *History of Travancore-Kochi Anglican Church, Part I, CMS Press, Kottayam, 1930, p.13 (appendix B).*
- 11 Dr. P.J. Thomas, *Malayala Sabityavum Christianikalum* (Malayalam Literature and Christians) 3rd ed. D.C. Books, Kottayam, 1989, p.242.
- 12 T.M. Chummar, *Bhasha Sabitya Charitram Christianikalum* (History of Prose Literature and Christians 2nd ed., National Book Stall, Kottayam, p.531.
- 13 Prof. M.K. Cherian in *Jnananikshepam*-Bailey Jubilee Souvenir, 1973, p.67.
- 14 Dr. P.J. Thomas, *Malayala Sabityavum Christianikalum* (Malayalam Literature and Christians) 3rd ed. D.C. Books, Kottayam, 1989, p.53 2
- 15 Dr. N. Sam, *Keralathile Samubika Navothanavum Sabityavum* (Social Renaissance and Literature in Kerala), National Book Stall, Kottayam, 1988, p.171.
- 16 Rosemary A. Kene, *Catalogue of the Papers of the Missions of the West Asia Committee* Vol.3, South India Missions (Church Mission Society), London, 1987, p.57.
- 17 *Jnananikshepam* – Bailey Souvenir, 1973, p.6.
- 18 *Ibid.* p.27.
- 19 *Ibid.* p.29.
- 20 First Three Newspapers in Kerala, *Jnananikshepam Ibid.* p.57.
- 21 *Jnananikshepam*, First Malayalam Newspaper, *Bhashaposhini*, 7, p.72. (December 1998, p.74).
- 22 *Ibid.* p.75.
- 23 Mahakavi Ulloor has not recorded in the *History of Kerala Literature* as G. Priyadarsan says that ‘Its main workers were Rev. George Mathan and Archdeacon Koshy.’ Ulloor says that Dr. Koshy was the publisher for a long time. T.M. Chummar has said that Geevarghese Kathanar and Archdeacon Koshy were the main workers of the magazine.
- 24 Prof. K.M. Cherian Kozhuvallur, *Benjamin Bailey and Printing*, Malayala Manorama Annual, 1973, p.144.
- 25 Ulloor S. Parameswara Iyer, *Ibid.* p.7.
- 26 *Jnananikshepam* 1856, Makaram.
- 27 R. Radhakrishnan, *Ibid.* p.157, 158.
- 28 Madras Church Missionary Records 17, 4 (April 1850), p.90, 91.
- 29 Bishop Wilson twice delivered Episcopal charges in the Kottayam Church during Mr. Bailey’s superintendence of the Village Mission. W.S. Hunt, ‘The Anglican Church in Travancore and Cochin 1816-1916’, Church Missionary Society, Kottayam, 1968, p.44.
- 30 The Rev. Mr. Bailey has now been in Travancore for 32 years, and is about to retire has been made the honoured instrument of publishing a valuable Malayalam and English dictionary ... ‘Madras Church Missionary Records 16, 4 (April 1849), p.87.
- 31 “Two notable and much needed gifts, he (Rev. B. Bailey) undoubtedly possessed – perseverance and prudence” John Tucker, South Indian Mission, quoted W.S. Hunt, *ibid.* p.121.
- 32 Dr. N. Sam, *ibid.* p.166.
- 33 V.T. David, *ibid.*, CMS Press, Kottayam, p.34.
- 34 W.S. Hunt, *ibid.*, p.205.
- 35 Madras Church Missionary Record, July-Sept. 1854, p.276.
- 36 The little paper supports itself and has reached the 69th number, *ibid.*
- 37 *Ibid.*, p.278.
- 38 V.T. David, *ibid.*, p.39.
- 39 *Ibid.*, p.44.
- 40 *Ibid.*, p.39.
- 41 *The Biography of Rev. Henry Baker*, CMS Press, Kottayam, 1879, p.4.
- 42 “From 1854 Mrs. Baker helped her husband to produce a vernacular diocesan magazine, *The Treasury of Knowledge*. The first magazine which was published enlivened by her sketches... EIRA Dalton ‘The Baker Family in India’. CMS Press, Kottayam, 1963, p.44.

- 43 *The Centenary Vol. of Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East 1799-1899*, Church Missionary Society, London, 1902, p.729.
- 44 “(Koshi, Koshi DD) conducted a periodical called *Treasury of Knowledge* for seven years.”
- 45 The speech on ‘Education of Children’ delivered by George Mathen on August 13th 1867 at the Court of Kollam Division.
- 46 The year mentioned by Rev. John is wrong. *Jnananikshepam* started publication in 1848.
- 47 Rev. E.V. John, *The Biography of Mavelikkara Archdeacon K. Koshi D.D.*, 1904, p.155-56.
- 48 V.T. David, *Ibid.* p.82-83

III

JNANANIKSHEPAM IN THE CONTEXT OF PRINTING AND LANGUAGE

The first printed newspaper in Malayalam is *Jnananikshepam*. Within two and a half decades of the arrival of modern printing in Kerala, *Jnananikshepam* made its appearance.

The credit for commencing printing using movable types in Kerala goes to CMS Press, Kottayam. The printing press to be installed at the CMS Press arrived from England in 1821 in Kottayam. Next year the Malayalam types necessary for the press in Kottayam were cast at the Foundry near St. George College, Chennai. Utilizing these types from Chennai, Benjamin Bailey printed some matters. However these types from Chennai were soon found to be defective and deformed. Benjamin Bailey searched for information in moulding types and found the details in Encyclopaedia Britannica. Based on these descriptions and with the help of the metal smiths of the region, Bailey moulded fresh types in Kottayam itself. Using these new types Bailey printed the New Testament, which he himself had translated into Malayalam and published it in 1829.

A literary composition with the title ‘Stories for Children translated from English’ was published from CMS Press in 1824. Benjamin Bailey was its translator. Whether the printing of this work was done using types from Chennai or from Kottayam

(moulded by Bailey) could not be correctly ascertained by researchers.

Nevertheless it can be concluded that as the printing equipment arrived from England in 1821 and printing commenced using the types from Chennai in 1821 itself.

Printing was the most significant factor that influenced the growth of Malayalam prose and its standardisation as well as for all-round utilisation. Along with these developments, a new educational system was propagated and prose became recognized as quite suitable for the communication of knowledge. This certainly helped the progress of prose.

The commencement of printing and the wide acceptance of prose as appropriate for propagation of ideas are the two elements which had played an important role in bringing about a comprehensive transformation in our cultural life. A comparative analysis of the situation before they had become part of the cultural life and the state affairs after they had effected a change in culture seem to be relevant here.

From Scribing to Modern Printing

There are many technological as well as cultural matters relative to the change of language from writing to printing. When the language underwent transformation in the previous phases of man's evolution, several technological and cultural factors were also included in such a change. A classical example of this is when oral communication was transformed into written communication. The customs in oral language were quite different from the practices of written language.

The method of book publishing before printing had originated, was known as scribing. Scribing was a handicraft which involved a great deal of labour, time and money. In the

world of scribing there was no author; only the 'writer' existed. Reader was more attracted by the quality of handwriting of the scribe than the style of the author. Several problems were involved in writing by hand, such as writer's interpretations to the words used by the author or the exchange of one word for another due to inadvertence of the writer, especially when several copies were made. Actually mistakes due to mix up of letters were so many as to have no limit at all. Till the author compiles his book, the essence is of the author, but once scribing begins, there is also the essence of the writer. In such circumstances, the essence of the scribe becomes more significant than that of the author. In the boundless world of poetry the lord is the poet. However, the limitless world of books, the only lord is the scribe.

Since writing was a profession, the reader did not have to do the work of the writer and if he did it, it would have been either unnecessary or a wasted effort. Reading was the duty of a scholar or student whereas writing was the role of the writer. It is due to this reason that there was a phase in history in which those who knew how to read did not know how to write.

Perhaps, the first mechanization of a work done by hand was scribing. Printing was the mechanized form of scribing. Mechanization led the country to industrialization. Printing showed us for the first time in history the good and evil which mechanization brings to the society. The nature of mechanization is mass production, which makes very many products that appear the same are made available within a prescribed time frame. This helps sale of products at economic rates. The realization that hundreds of copies of a single page could be made available within a prescribed time, the cost became considerably lower than what was demanded by the scribes. People who assumed that mechanization of scribing was impossible, propagated that printing was the work of Satan.

This reaction of people becomes evident in the experience of John Fust when he reached Paris with copies of the Bible printed at Gutenberg's printing press. People were amazed at the many Bibles with the same appearance and format sold by John Fust. Many mistook him for a sorcerer or magician and the Magistrate was informed of the incident. Authorities searched the house of Fust and recovered very many printed copies of the Bible there. They misunderstood the red ink found on the book for his blood and people dubbed him as a devotee of evil spirit. In the end he was afraid that he would be shot by the authorities. Then he revealed the secret of printing to the assembly of people in Paris and saved his own life.

As the printing machine came to be accepted widely people who had made scribing as their profession were without jobs. The first victims of mechanization in printing must have been the workers involved in scribing. But on the other hand, the printing industry and its ancillary industries which were growing at a faster pace were creating very many job opportunities.

Mass production through printing resulted in a very great increase in the number and size of books. This created the circumstances in which books became available to all those who wanted them. It also removed the scarcity in study materials which was felt earlier. This helped to put general education on a faster track of growth.

Prose most appropriate for idea presentation

Before printing commenced and became widespread as well after these happenings, poetry was the ordinary method of presenting creative compositions, books of knowledge and traditional education. Moreover, they were available only to a minority among the people. The prose available was limited and was written using certain ancient letters which are not in

current use. A change in this situation was brought about by printing. Recognition dawned that prose gave great freedom for the presentation of ideas. And from the beginning of printing attempts were initiated to make existing prose better and more discourse-friendly. That prominence was given to a particular form of alphabet called 'Granthalipi', which preceded the present alphabet in printing instead of the ancient alphabets. This was a very significant and beneficial change.

The language suitable for teaching knowledge and for the propagation of religion was prose. Books of poems are invaluable only to the scholars. On the other hand, books of prose acceptable to both scholars and ordinary people. Missionaries came to Kerala for propagation of Christianity and they found printing and modern education as greatly useful to achieve this aim. These were the reasons for the emphasis given to prose in printing and education. "The first Malayalam magazine *Paschimodayam* was an acknowledged attempt¹ to communicate Western scientific thoughts to the people of Kerala." A declaration regarding the value of prose had been given in its introductory statement.

"It is amazing that the light rises not only from the East, but from the West as well. As Kerala was under the rule of the English, it has been a bridge by God's grace, for matters that happen in the West to come here. Besides the skill and science which already exist here there are many things happening in the West. And there are serious differences between them as well. It is the custom of the votaries of Hindu knowledge to provide pleasure to the scholars by composing verses (poems) after meditating on the essential principles of *Paramatma* and *Jivatma* whereas the sign of Western knowledge was to explain in prose the basis of seasons for the benefit of children."²

The language of wisdom of the Hindus was poetry. However,

prose was the route adopted by modern scientific knowledge in English. When modern knowledge and modern education was spread widely, Indian languages including Malayalam, followed the example of English. “In the English language, prose literature had progressed much more than poetic literature. Therefore in the circumstances brought about by the spread of English, a prose style originated also in Malayalam language. It is clear from several things mentioned above that before Malayalam literature coming into contact with English, the former did not at all have an all important prose style. Scripting of books was done by imitating Sanskrit language by the poetically inclined writers, and by replicating English language by those who were votaries of prose. In the modern times there was a decrease in the contact between Malayalam and Sanskrit and increase in the relations of Malayalam with English language. This resulted in the situation of poetic literature becoming weak.”³ This observation of K.N. Sankara Pillai, even though it is eight decades old, contains the truth regarding the route used for the progress of prose. Added to this is the following remark by Dr. K. Raghavan Pillai. “A perusal of the history of our prose would reveal that those who wrote in prose at that time, including Kerala Varma were influenced by English prose and were concerned with enriching the Malayalam prose in the English model. They operated against the backdrops of diverse models of prose.”⁴

Before printing commenced in Kerala, prose was not in use as the all important language style for writing. The language style was poetry. But prose did exist then, for issuing orders and similar instructions. But it did not have the ease that was possible with poetry. (There might have been one or two works as an exception.) In such a situation books necessary for the propagation of religious tenets and education had to be printed in prose, with the result that the all important spoken language

in prose style became the printing language. But in Europe where printing began the written language in prose became the printing language. Because there prose was already being used in literary compositions. But in countries such as Kerala, where poetry had predominance as the written language, it was spoken language that became the printing language. The most simple and convenient means for communication is conversation. When spoken language becomes written language, the latter would naturally acquire the simplicity and ease of the former to some extent. For that reason it would be capable for efficient communication.

In all languages “spoken language serves as the basis for the written language.”⁵ Written language is born through the transformation of spoken language. It is born, grows up and becomes separate. Just as steam solidifies and transforms itself into water. Spoken words, which are the style of language of the times, are turned into written words, which are the language style of a place with the help of small technical equipments. In between this transformation that the differences of prose and poetry of the written words enter. Emphasis to be given to which prose and poetry forms of spoken words and written words depend on the history of the style of spoken and written words. Cultural and technological progress of a particular society when the writing skill behind written language is mechanized to transform itself into printing, the existence of a rich collection of prose by handwriting prior to the change, makes the transformation easier. If not, it will be a motivating force to form the prose style as a timely and technological demand.

Printing and education brought about widespread awareness of prose. As this awareness increased prose became standardized. In all the implements used for printing during the beginnings one can observe the inadequacies of prose before

its standardization as well as its constant attempts to arrive at a standard. The traditional wealth of language protected prose from being an obstacle to grasp its extraordinariness. Moreover it helped to rise to a noble situation. Later when it became more and more adept in communication through propagation and utilization and when it developed accepting assets from one's own and foreign language sources that were diverse, prose achieved brilliance. Later as it avoided the extraordinariness with common borderlines also achieved radiance. We have to understand the extraordinary applications as the good qualities of contemporary language.

The literary compositions in the beginning of Malayalam printing had several unattractive features. But they in no way negated or covered up the simplicity and ease demonstrated in communication. It is in this context of ideas that one should examine the language specialties of *Jnananikshepam*, the first printed news magazine in Malayalam. Then one would appreciate that its language is filled with the radiance of lofty prose. After two and a half decades of publication of *Jnananikshepam*, the ordeals and unattractiveness natural to a language constantly striving to upgrade itself can be observed in plenty. These ordeals and unattractiveness are of paramount significance when we consider that *Jnananikshepam* was the first Malayalam newspaper which could boast of writers from all communities and from different parts of Kerala. At the same time, it is also a noble example of prose that showed the way for later Malayalam prose literature.

The Language of *Jnananikshepam*

In the first volume of *Jnananikshepam* an introductory statement had been given on its first page. It was as follows: "*Jnananikshepam* would be printed at the printing press at Kottayam every month. It was being brought about for

providing knowledge in matters which are useful and interesting. It will contain regional and foreign news as well as details of matters (stories) in respective areas, including details of tenants in those areas. Moreover it will also have as its contents features regarding birds, animals and fishes as well as particulars on things that sprout and lifeless. Customs prevailing in Travancore state and some papers from Regulation would also make their appearance in it. It would also feature Christianity, medicine and astronomy and related matters. Those who are interested in these matters, hopefully, would buy this newspaper and also recommend it to their friends."

The long vowels and half letters found in this statement were not in use in olden times either in scribing or in printing. If they are avoided the language of *Jnananikshepam* was similar to the language prevalent today. In 1938 L.A. Ravivarma had written in the Introduction to *Prachina Kerala Lipikal* (Old Kerala Scripts) the following: "The modern distinctive scripts which indicate short and long vowels, the crescent symbol and other new scripts were unknown about fifty years ago." It is clear from what L.A. Ravivarma points out that these were not used in the language then. Therefore the absence of the use of crescent symbol in *Jnananikshepam* printed 40 years earlier need not be considered as a deficiency. Even though the long vowels were used in the first issue of *Jnananikshepam*, their usage was dropped in the subsequent issues (more about this later). Ravivarma's introduction continues: "In order to make this happen, this newspaper would hopefully be purchased and also recommended to your friends." Here crescent symbol had to be added. But it was not. This gives the impression of the absence of 'something' necessary. Nevertheless the style of the above quoted introductory statement is appropriate, radiant and bright.

The above quoted introduction in *Jnananikshepam* had been

printed very much before the unforgettable George Mathen and Kerala Varma Valiakoi Thampuran of the historical development of Malayalam prose literature had begun to render their service as authors of the prose literature. “George Mathen was known as the architect of language in so far as he organized the language of prose as an effective and skillful medium for the composition of essays, art of speaking, rules of grammar, elucidation of philosophy, explanation of modern science, literary criticism, social comments, the process of translation and contemplation of moral thoughts.”⁶ The first volume of *Jnananikshepam* was published almost twelve years before the composition of works in prose by George Mathen, who was involved in literature pursuits during the period from 1860 to 1870.⁷

Kerala Varma Valiakoi Thampuran was another prominent personality who had given great contributions to the progress of prose literature. He was first the member and later the President of the Book Committee established on the express wish of the Maharaja Ailyam Thirunal and Diwanji Raja Sir T. Madhavan Nair. During this service he wrote many text books in prose, edited and published them. When the first volume of *Jnananikshepam* came out, Kerala Varma Thampuran was hardly three years old.⁸

Let us observe the very first sentence of the introductory statement of *Jnananikshepam*: “*Jnananikshepam* will be printed at the printing press at Kottayam and will be published as a monthly.” If a sentence expressing this idea is written today, what all differences would be there in style and vocabulary? The sentences that follow are also the same. The precision and beauty in the use of the relation of words in a group deserves special attention.

Malayalam Prose reaches maturity

Even before many, who later adorned the mantle of being the originators of modern Malayalam prose, had begun to provide their literary contributions, *Jnananikshepam* had commenced to print and publish models of modern Malayalam prose. Perusing through the different volumes of *Jnananikshepam* before 1860, one can observe very many different examples of modern Malayalam prose such as letters, news, advice, criticism, questions & answers, discourse and so on. The volumes of later periods contain works which are better in diversity, scripting and language style than of the previous period.

Model 1

Horoscope of *Jnananikshepam*

A Dialogue between a Vedantin and a Hindu Scholar

Vedantin: I met a villager yesterday and asked him if he can go on an errand to a far away place. But he refused to go saying that the time was unfavourable to him and that if he went far from his locality some adversity would befall him. But he was not able to elucidate further about his anxiety. Since you are a Hindu scholar, I thought you would be able to throw more light on the matter.

Hindu Scholar: I am happy to share my knowledge with you. By truth becoming public knowledge and also receiving purification, only its quality is enhanced. Nothing untoward is likely to happen from it.

Vedantin: What is the content of a Horoscope?

Hindu Scholar: All the important events that happen to an individual. One can learn everything from a horoscope. As soon

as a child is born, his subsequent habits employment, situations, events can be predicted. Horoscope also gives information on the days of blessings and the days of sadness and adversity; on what age he/she will be married and the birth of his children, death and so on.

Vedantin: These facts are truly amazing. This implies that those who write the horoscopes should be highly respected. When most of us are wondering what would happen to us next day, the person who predicts all the happenings of an individual as soon as he is born should be a super human being having divine inspiration.

Hindu Scholar: We can wonder at the science on which the horoscope is based. However there is no need to think of the person who writes it in superlative terms. Most of them are of a kind, actually lower kind at that. Perceiving the errors, which some of them have committed, they are not only not superman, but even lacking in intelligence. Once a European attempted to find out if such a person knows what he was predicting. The White man sent the horoscope reader away asking him to come next day. When he appeared the next day, the White man thrashed him twice asking him if he knew he was coming to get thrashed. Thus ridiculing him, the White man sent him away. Therefore these people cannot be considered as intelligent. Their predictions about what would happen in the future is solely due to the science they adhere to.

Vedantin: If horoscope is not written by having divine knowledge and a keen intellect, how is it then done?

Hindu Scholar: It happens due to the position of the sun and the moon and other planets at the time of one's birth. Each of the nine planets have special results, which are different in the twelve signs of the Zodiac. This happens not under the knowledge and direction of the horoscope reader.

Vedantin: I have also heard that. But it is not a valid witness to its actual occurrence.

Hindu Scholar: In fact there are many witnesses. The information given about planets in Astrology happen to be true. Therefore the horoscope made based on its principles and calculations also can be believed to be true. The reason for this assertion is the expertise based on the knowledge of that science.

Vedantin: Calculating about the planets and predicting the future are two different matters. This assertion is based on the principle that what habitually happens will happen again. There is only one opinion that forms the basis of this and that cannot be believed nor accepted. Because there is some meaning in saying that the planets in the heavens can be the cause for the happenings on earth.

(Pages 142, 143, 147 Vols. 18, 19 Medam (May), Edavam (Jan.) 1850)

Here the discourse is about the unscientific attitude to Horoscope. Some may agree to some of the statements and yet others may disagree. But the significant matter in this conversation in prose is the language of the two characters, the Vedantin and the Scientist. One cannot point out a regional term or colloquial words in it. Not only that in this age of Information Technology it is interesting to note the use of the word 'to know' in the meaning 'to inform'. Shortly stated, it is a good example of a conversation. Some unique features of composition in prose, such as the language style to present any idea logically, including examples to elucidate the idea in a clear manner and at the same time making it attractive and the diversification in the scripting of prose while adopting a conversational format, are quite evident.

Model 2

Guidance for *Jnananikshepam*

Friends, I would very much like to give you an advice, which is different from what I had written earlier in *Jnananikshepam*. This would probably make you happy. You are aware that the heart of man is the dwelling place of either God or Satan. This can be guessed to some extent from their facial expressions which are signs. Because it is difficult to look directly into the hearts of men. Nevertheless if the signs are properly analysed, both attitudes can be recognised. It is not that important to know the heart of another person. Let one know oneself. If one doesn't know oneself, he will know it subsequently. The heart is like a house. Shouldn't we ask who dwells in it? Why dwell there? and so on. At no point of time will the house be empty. Because either God or Satan would be residing in it. If God dwells, the heart will be filled with divine goodness. If Satan, presence of evil will be the result. The two worlds, heaven and hell are found within man himself. Therefore if this advice pointing out the good and the evil is neglected, divine blessings will not pour down from heaven. Moreover, man will be caught in the snares of the devil. Such persons would abuse, ridicule and show contempt for the good advice. That is because they are sinners and lack a high level of standard. The man who allows the devil to dwell in his heart also co-habits with seven sinful animals which are his ministers such as lion, jackal, snake, rat, dog, vulture and elephants which represent arrogance, deception, jealousy, greed, gluttony, vanity and avarice. These give him the experience of eternal damnation. What one sows, he will also have to harvest. All those who do evil will be affected by fear, strain, dissatisfaction and anger. And those who indulge in prostitution, robbery, drinking, stealing and calumny have become corrupt and they will not enter the Kingdom of God

with divine light. Therefore, dear people, join the divine army which is led by peace, love, happiness, compassion, patience, meekness and equanimity and fight against the enemy of sin. The practice of these qualities would enable us with divine devotion, which in turn would give us victory in the fight making all the weapons of the enemy futile. This will give us the benefit of the experience of the good in this life itself. Purify your heart and transform it into a temple, allowing the true God to dwell in it. You would, in turn, receive divine gifts. You would be the eternal servant of God. All these that I have written have been demonstrated as a reflection in the mirror to those who have devotion to God. Those who are wise will enjoy greatness as their right; whereas those who lack intelligence will rise with a sense of shame.

(Pages 594, 595, 596, Vol.75; Makaram 1855)

In horoscope, example had been used. But in advice proverbs have been used. For example, "One who does not know himself, will know later", "What one sows, he will reap".

How is this model of prose of 1855 different from the prose of 2002? What deficiencies can be pointed out in the former? One could argue that 'samvruthokaram' had not been used. But that is not the mistake on the part of the author or *Jnananikshepam*. That is a problem of the contemporary language policy.

Model 3

Idol Worship

Recently an idol was stolen from a temple in Aluva, near Kochi. It is told that a demented individual took it away at night. Here who is more intelligent? The deranged individual who stole the icon or the statue which could not avoid from being stolen? The idols which cannot save themselves from being

stolen, certainly cannot save those who serve them. The time has come to turn away from these myths and seek the God who is truth and life, even though some may say that they honour God. But those who say this honour the idols and often go to the temples and observe feasts there. Obviously such people do not honour God. As a matter of fact while performing these rituals, they are insulting God. The true God himself may not regard them as his faithful servants. Some months in Alapuzha there was an idol in a temple, to which many offerings were given and in whose name a new temple had been built. The icon also had very many devotees in the area. But one day some people entered the temple and took away the statue in a basket. Did the green gem know that thieves had come to steal it or not? If it knew, did it show decent manners to the people who used to go there day and night and serve it? Is there a value in honouring a Swami (Sanyasin) who accepts the fact of stealing the idol from among the people who had worshipped it? If the idol did not know about the stealing, how will it know the celebrations before it? How can it be made to hear who seek its succour? Is such a thing without any intelligence worthy for anything other than contempt from intelligent human beings?

If the green gem which was stolen from Alapuzha was only a stone that is neither chiselled nor given shape, it may be called a shapeless thing. But are those who worship an idol without hands, feet, head or tail, men with a beard or just insects?

(Pages 611, 612. Vol.77, Meenam 1855)

This is a remarkable writing in prose which achieves the purpose of the language through the narration of events and their analysis, even though it appears to be performing religious slander. It is not the grave style of Southern Kerala, but the simple manner of Northern Kerala. It is closer to the oral language and therefore many colloquial terms common to oral communication are found in the written prose.

Model 4

Proclamation of the Queen Address to the Kings, Leaders and Subjects of India

The proclamation made by Queen Victoria, who was the monarch of Great Britain, Ireland; of those who have migrated to Europe, Asia, Africa, America and Australia; and those countries which are the colonies to Britain and also the protector of Christianity:

Due to many serious matters and with the advice and consent of the priests, Lords and common people who congregated in the Parliament, it is decided to take away the power to rule so far exercised by the respected East India Company from the company so that henceforward this power will be exercised by us directly.

Therefore we hereby inform and proclaim that, since, with the advice and consent of the above cited people, we are responsible for the power to rule, all the subjects living in India, who were faithful and obediently devoted to us and our successors, should submit themselves to the authority of those stewards whom we have appointed to rule on behalf of us. We have also decided to appoint our beloved brother and intelligent adviser Charles John Viscount Canning, in whose ability, intelligence and obedient devotion we have firm belief, as the first Viceroy and Governor General of these countries. He would execute the orders and legislation which we send periodically through one of our chief secretaries.

All the civil and military officers who are now involved in the work of the East India Company are hereby confirmed in their employment in order to henceforth obey and work according to the rules and regulations decided by us.

We hereby accept all the agreements and contracts which the East India Company has entered into with the honourable kings of India. We inform that we would rule accordingly and that they are to be, according to the agreements, be vigilant and cautious in their implementation.

We do not wish to add more countries than those which are already under our dominion. At the same time we would not leave off those who attack our countries and our rights without punishment. And we would not allow any attack against countries and rights of other people. We would honour and respect the rights and positions of the Indian kings as our own. We greatly desire that the peace among the people and the prosperity brought about by good governance as well as the mutual love among them and our subjects, increase considerably.

We believe that whatever we are duty-bound to fulfil for our other subjects, we are also indebted to fulfil for the people in India. Our responsibilities will be carried out with the blessings of the almighty God, truly and firmly.

We firmly believe in the truth of Christianity. While affirming this we also inform that we would not forcefully make our subjects accept our belief. We also announce that we would not interfere in belief and rituals related to other religions and would not bring harm or pain to anyone on account of it. We proclaim that, according to our royal order, we wish to provide protection to everyone without showing any partiality. We give assurance that if anyone interferes in religious worship and belief, our opprobrium would be on them and therefore we advice to desist from such acts.

Moreover, we hereby announce that good governance depends on education and ability and self-confidence of the officers among our subjects. Such people should be selected and employment given to them without regard to their caste and creed.

We understand the attachment Indians have to the land of their forefathers. We respect this. Apart from collecting justifiable taxes, we give assurance that no changes will be made in the matters regarding land ownership. In enacting laws and implementing them, we would endeavour to protect the age old rights and customs of the Indians.

We are greatly saddened by the harm and misfortunes which have befallen on India, by the activities of greedy people who have deceived their own countrymen by spreading canards and inciting them to agitations. Our strength has been demonstrated by the way these agitations have been suppressed. If these agitators become obedient and desire to walk on the straight path, we would be willing to show them mercy and forgive their misdeeds.

Through our Viceroy and Governor General we have informed that those who had committed serious crimes against our government would be forgiven on the basis of certain stipulations agreed upon by those who took part in the mutiny so that further blood should not be shed and peace be established in the Indian subcontinent at the earliest. We have consented to and confirmed all that have been ordered by the Viceroy and Governor General. Moreover we would show mercy to all those guilty people, except to those who have set out to kill English people, a fact which have been proved or is on the way to being proved. But it would be against royal justice if these people are not punished.

To those proven killers, chief agitators, those who encouraged mutiny and those who had given shelter to the agitators after knowing their identity, we can only promise that their life would be spared. When such people are given appropriate punishment, the reason for abandoning their obedient devotion would be inquired into with considerable caution and attention. If those

who believed the fraudulent propaganda of the deceivers by inadvertence, they will be shown mercy, if they are known.

All the others who have set out to fight against our Government should return to their homes peacefully. If they do so, we shall forget their crimes committed against us, our authority and our honour and also give them pardon. This we solemnly promise.

We are pleased to grant pardon and show mercy to all those who will do in the above manner before the next January 1.

When peace will, with God's grace, return to the whole country, it would be our great desire to encourage peaceful jobs to enhance trading and business, which would be advantageous to the people and thus engage in governance which would benefit our all subjects. Their progress is our strength, their satisfaction our stability, and their gratitude, our great reward. Thus in order to fulfil our desire to provide welfare and wellbeing to the people, may almighty God give us and all those under us strength.

English Translation, Aymanam P. John

(Page 22, 23, 24. March 1859)

This is a royal proclamation translated by Aymanam P. John, who was a reputed prose writer. "Among the Keralites, who enrolled themselves in the English medium school began by Church Mission Society and obtained knowledge, some became great language scholars, who have supplied immense contributions to Malayalam language and literature. One of them was Aymanam P. John, who was born on August 7, 1825 at Aymanam, a place close to Kottayam. John was one of the four people chosen for higher education by the Missionaries."⁹

Model 5

Rama Panikkar and Pulleli Kunju Pilla on the Whitemen

Kunju: That doesn't appear to be a proper answer. Among the ten crore people, Hindus are not many according to caste considerations. In the whole world there may be about 80 crore people. subtracting the ten crores, balance is seventy crores. It is impossible to consider that these entire people were born from an illicit relationship from the minority.

Panikkar: Kunju, what're you saying? Do you know the origins of Whitemen? Ages ago when Srirama went to Lanka with his army of monkeys to fight with Ravana, the monkeys had sexual relationship with many women there and made them pregnant. Since Rama, who came to know this, did not want to kill the women, they were dumped in a small boat, which was pushed to the ocean. Due to the force of the push, the boat reached a far away island. Because due to the 'Balam' (strength) of the push, they reached an island, the island was given the name 'Balalethi'. The term was shrunk to be called 'Balathi'. All the Whitemen are the children of these women.

Kunju: Hey, nonsense. Who is the moron who told this tale? In an island which takes four or five months to travel to arrive, who would believe that a boat reached there because it was pushed, no matter how strong the push was? Moreover, in those days the language spoken by Rama and others was Sanskrit. It is not likely that Malayalam words 'Balal ethi' were part of the Sanskrit vocabulary. It is also told that this term connotes the meaning 'the other side of the ocean'. Panikkar, let not this nonsensical story be heard by anybody else.

Panikkar: Oh, that's way, is it? Then please don't tell anyone that I have narrated this story, not even to the Treasurer. Some

fools have made up a tale like that. No Westerner also be told this story. However, can we say that the people of other countries were born from the remainder parts of the face or some other limbs of Brahma?

Kunju: Yes, alright. Then let them be equal to the Brahmins. Or higher than us, who were born from the lower limbs such as the feet.

Panikkar: Ok, ok. I had not thought that far. (To the son) Madhava, tell your mother to crush the arecanut a little. Treasurer Kunju takes the betel and chews.

When we were chewing the betel, Panikkar's wife along with his seven or eight year old son Madhava came to the outhouse. As soon as Madhava saw his father he became coquettish and called out: 'Fa-ther'. Then the mother said: 'The boy won't wear bhasmakuri. I was thinking of telling you to ask him why he doesn't do that.

Caste Difference: A Conversation (Pullelikunju)

August 1810

Ulloor S. Parameswara Iyer had described this prose style of Pullelikunju as "The most noble example of prose."¹⁰

Short and Long Vowels and *Jnananikshepam*

The long vowels such as A, O and their allographs (connected forms) are the new products of the Malayalam prose. Short and long vowels like A, Ā, O, Ō are the indispensable components of Malayalam language, they were not in use in writing and printing for long. But in their absence, the beauty of the prose was lost as well as it was a hindrance to understand their meaning. Many mistakes also happened in reading and in grammar.

In the Malayalam-English dictionary published by Benjamin

Bailey in 1846, Ā, Ō have not been considered as the independent script in the vocabulary. They were regarded as merely the elongated forms of A and O, respectively. Although long vowels were not provided with scripts and allographs, Benjamin Bailey had followed the then existing style of the prose writing and the Sanskrit precedents. But he seems to have been unaware that Ā and Ō were language sounds suitable for altering the meaning, for which they require special scripts and allographs (connected forms).

Following are the explanations to script and allographs in his Malayalam-English Dictionary.

A: The 11th letter or sixth short vowel of the Malayalam alphabet, corresponding to the letter 'E' as pronounced in most languages, and is pronounced short or long according to usage. When used as short vowel, it is pronounced like in 'end' and when used as a long vowel like 'e' in they. When connected with consonants or used as a medial letter it is represented by ീ, which is called 'pulli'. This letter is seldom used in Sanskrit as a short vowel, generally as a long one. Words beginning with A as a short vowel are here first given, then those beginning with it as a long vowel (page 121).

A. The letter A is used as a long vowel initial.

O. The thirteenth letter in Malayalam alphabet, corresponding in sound to O, and is pronounced short or long according to usage. When used as a short vowel it is pronounced like 'O' in 'odd'; when used as a long vowel like 'O' in 'ode'. Words beginning with a 'O' as a short vowel are here first given, then those beginning with it as a long vowel.

Ō. The letter O as a long vowel initial, corresponding to the English long Ō in ode. The Ō (long) is sometimes added to distinguish it from a short O. The connected form of this vowel

affixed to the last word of a sentence or to a single word alone, denotes ignorance or doubt.

Although, to distinguish O (short) from O (long) sometimes the connect form () is used, in writings. Short vowel and long vowel are indicated in the script itself. But in the running heads given in page by page the long connected form is added.

Although in the dictionary of Benjamin Bailey there is no difference between short and long vowels, in a book printed in the CMS Press in the same year as the dictionary, the connected forms of Ā (long) and Ō (long) had been used. This has been pointed out by Dr. Scaria Sacaria¹¹. The allusion here is to the book 'Investigation into Religions' by Herman Mogling (translated by Joseph Pitt) printed at CMS Press, Kottayam. At the same time in a work printed at Tellicherry, there is no difference in the short and long vowels.

In the first issue of *Jnananikshepam* published on the first of Vrischikam () 1848, the long vowels Ā and Ō as well as their connected forms have been used. But quite immediately in the next issue itself, it went back on this approach. That is to say it returned to the traditional style. Because it was not accepted by the conventional people. Later slowly through several issues it was re-established in the pages of *Jnananikshepam*. Before describing this significant subject of language history, the diverse opinions that were prevalent in the matter of long Ā and Ō.

"There was a time when language scholars had held the view that Malayalam originated from Sanskrit and that the Malayalam letters were comprehension of Sanskrit formulas. Therefore they decided that the letter not available in Sanskrit need not be there in Malayalam as well. A, O have no short form in Sanskrit. But they are there in Malayalam as illustrative letter. Due to the undue influence of Sanskrit the short form was unavailable,

whereas in Malayalam it was available as an independent letter. It may be a repetition to inform the language scientists that due to these reasons, the difference between short and long vowels occurred."¹²

But much before this George Mathen had pointed out in the Grammar of Malayalam. "The alphabet presently accepted in Malayalam is suitable for Sanskrit language and for that reason it is not appropriate for Malayalam. Some letters among them do not occur in Malayalam and those which are not available are also needed for this language." (page 29, 30, 1969). Expressing his opinion in this manner, George Mathen went on to write the alphabet necessary for Malayalam according to his own perception and had said in *Jnananikshepam*: "Short and long vowels are necessary for Malayalam alphabet for its perfection. If this is not done, the words which are different in meaning and utterance will appear the same which in turn would damage the purpose of the language.

Even though some people, during certain periods, had thought in this manner, the influence of Sanskrit was so overbearing that the differences in short and long vowels had not been recorded by either script or allographs both in writing and printing from the beginning itself. The first ever book printed in Malayalam was 'Samkshepavedartham'. In the handwritten style of those days there was no difference between short and long in A and O letters. It was also not there in the printed 'Samkshepavedartham'.¹³ There were also no letters to indicate the short and long differences in the Malayalam-Portuguese Dictionary written by Father Arnos.¹⁴ Dr. Scaria Saccaria¹⁵ had also pointed out that the lack of arrangement in the script system used in the books printed at the Mission Printing Press was also found in the books of the Hindus as well.

It is in this situation in which the lack of a system in the use of

short and long vowels and their connected forms predominated, that the first issue of *Jnananikshepam*, the first printed news magazine in Malayalam reaches the readers. This issue of the magazine adopted a clear position in the matter of the script problem, that a special script should be used in incorporating the short and long vowels into the language. But this language, for some reason, could not be followed by *Jnananikshepam* in its every issue without fail. If the different issues of the news magazine were to be observed, we would discover that the progress of *Jnananikshepam* in the script problem and the going back from the original position, were all due to the pressure tactics and the canards it had to face.

In the first issue published in Vrischikam¹⁶ (November) 1848 only a few words such as Kottayam, *Jnananikshepam*, do not have connected forms. All the other words in the magazine are printed with the elongated letters A and O as well the necessary connected forms.

But in the second issue published on Dhanu 1st 1848 this approach was not followed. In fact it went back. Contrary to what happened in the first issue only three or four words were printed with long vowels. The remained words, both short and long vowels, were printed with a single connected form. This going back resulted in a change of headline. The correct headline ought to have been “The Diwanji to sit inside the Fort” had to be printed as “The Diwanji to sit inside the basket”.

In the next ten issues (3-12) A, O vowels were printed without differentiating the short and the long. But the thirteenth issue made a return to the first issue and printed vowels with the short and long differences. Here also there was an exception. In the word to the earth (Bhumiyilekku) should have used the long for ‘le’. But what was actually used was short. However from the 14th issue onwards, A, O vowels are used both with differences

as well as without differences. This varied usage might have been due to the diverse habits and interests of the reporters. And in the issue itself there is lack of difference. For example ‘kotta’ (basket – short) and ‘kōtta’ (long) were printed maintaining the difference. And in some issues in one article itself there are usages with difference and without differences of A and O vowels. An article in 17th issue of ‘Meenam’ (March) 1850 on a country called Media is an example of the varied usage.

From 14th (Dhanu 1849–January) to 21st issue (Karkkadakam 1850 – July) words with short-long difference as well as without difference have been printed in a mixed manner. However, from the 22nd issue (Chingam 1850–September) to 30th issue (Edavam 1851 – May) the difference has been maintained. Probably all these variations might have been caused by carelessness or oversight in writing, composing or proof reading. In the same article the same word has been printed in two different manners – short and long. For example, Kottayam as ‘Kottayam’ (short) and ‘Kōttayam’ (long). By the time of the 37th issue (Vrischikam 1851 – November), short vowels are more than long vowels.

The 38th issue (Dhanu 1851 – January) is the same as the 2nd issue, in which the return appears to be complete in the sense that the long Ā, Ō vowels are fully abandoned. (Here also there is an exception in the matter of one or two words.) This approach continues till the 42nd issue. Thereafter from the 43rd (Edavam 1852 – May) till the 49th issue mixed usage is observed. From the issue 50, the frequency of using the long vowels increases. Generally, only the short form had been used in Regulation papers, Bible quotations and in articles from the people in issues which used only the long form of A and O. On the title page the name of the magazine is given as ‘Jnananikshêpam’ with the e in the name in the short form. (The correct usage is ‘e’ as the long vowel form. But from the issue 80 (Midhunam 1855) onwards the name of the title page given correctly with

the 'e' in *Jnananikshepam* as the long vowel form. And 'Kottayam' with the short 'o' had been corrected to 'O' in the long version 'Kōttayam'.

Briefly stated, *Jnananikshepam* which attempted to print separate scripts and connected forms for short and long vowels, which was different from the scribing tradition and the style of printing then prevalent, abandoned the attempt sometimes. However gradually it implemented the same. Even though the news magazine stood for the progressive change of the script, it appears that popular opinion halted its attempts in that direction. It may be remembered that later Kandathil Varghese Mappila had attempted to reform the script and had met with ridicule with the word "the scribble of Varghese Mappila creates a dot on his head."¹⁷ But an editor like Hawksworth could easily grasp the inconvenience caused by the usage of the same script for short and long A and O vowels as well as the expedience in using them separately. One of his collaborators, George Mathan, who was a grammarian had wanted to include A (short and long) and O (short and long) in the Malayalam alphabet. But the society would always oppose change. It could not easily abandon the traditional habits in scribing and the divine dialect. Therefore even those who had thought of bringing about a change in the script, would have found it quite difficult to implement their new ideas. Let us look at the opinion of C.P. Achuta Menon on this matter. "Diverse opinion has resulted in diversity in the arrangement of letters. Some people are of the view that A and O letter, whether they are short or long ought to be written in the same manner. But others opine that short and long vowels ought to be written independently. However it may not be appropriate to think in Sanskrit these letters need not be considered separately. For example, if the words 'kotta' (short) and 'kōtta' (long) as well as 'chembu' (e – short) and chēmbu (e – long) are written with the same script, the meaning would

be utterly different. Some may read the chēmbu (e – long) lying in the kotta (o – short) (basket) as the 'chembu' (e – short), the copper metal lying in the 'kōtta' (o – long) fort."¹⁸

Still others were against changing the long usage of A, O vowels and their connected forms having a 'pulli' (sign) in Sanskrit to become the short vowels in Malayalam printing.

Two decades after the publication of the opinion of C.P. Achutha Menon, an article with the headline 'Some criticisms of Script' appeared. A part of it is pertinent here: "Some of the vowels are available in Sanskrit as long vowels only. That is to say the forefathers had stipulated to write vowels as long only. But a need arose in Malayalam language to write A, O vowels as short. In these circumstances the number of printing presses in Malayalam had increased along with the efforts to reform the language. Some printers who were unaware of the Sanskrit stipulations changed some vowels and consonants which the forefathers had installed as long into short vowels. In order to compensate the loss occurred to the position of long vowel, A was used with a double bend and ō (long) with special long signs. Some consonants were given a new style and installed in the position of long vowels. Several people adopted the 'follow the front runner' strategy. Actually all that was required to generate a new form were scripts to utter A and O letters as short vowels, which were necessary for usage in Malayalam language. This reform which was not older than thirty years is pertinent only to Malayalam language. But the people have to think whether this new reform would become a serious hindrance to the Sanskrit scripts and books of Malayalees, which did exist much before the script reform. It would be convenient if the reform was altered a little. What could be done is to do the opposite of what new reform stipulated. That is writing with a specific sign it should be pronounced as long as was done earlier, and if written with another sign, it must be pronounced as short, which is the

new reform. This approach justifies the decision taken earlier and makes the modern need possible without it becoming a hindrance.”¹⁹

This confusion regarding the use of special scripts and connected forms for the long vowels of A and O was reflected also in the books printed at the CMS Press. In the very same year books have been printed with and without special symbols. This did not, in all probability, happen accidentally. It must have been due to the discrimination and partiality of the authors. In any case there were doubts among scholars whether the reformed scripts and connected form were first used by CMS Press or Bazel Mission Printing Press. Thomas Paul had expressed the opinion that language historians have to confirm the truth behind the view that ‘Dr. Gundert was the first one to use a long *pulli* to express the vowel A in the elongated form. C.K. Moosad writes the following about this: “The Dictionary of Gundert was published in 1872. The special symbol is used throughout it as much as possible. But in the second edition of the Bailey dictionary printed in March 1868, there is no long – at all. However on the last page of the book on matriarchical laws printed at the CMS Press in 1871, the symbol indicating long was mentioned in two or three places. In the Civil Procedure Code printed at the CMS Press in 1872 there was no symbol indicating long. In the ‘Hindu Sastrasarasamgraham’ printed at the CMS Press in 1877 also there was no long symbol. Therefore it may be inferred that the sign for long *pulli* came into usage in the north and its user could have been Gundert.”²⁰

Since the Malayalam scribing does not have a differentiation between short and long vowels, they are not in usage in the compositions printed using stencils in Tellicherry by the Bazel Mission. Printing using movable types under the auspices of Basel Mission began in Mangalore in 1864. Sixteen years before this the first issue of *Jnananikshepam* was published on

Vrischikam (November) 1, 1848 in which the elongated scripts of A and O vowels and their connected forms had been used. As pointed out earlier by Dr. Skaria Sakkaria, the connected forms of A and O vowels have been used in the book ‘Mathavicharam’ (Inquiry into Religion) printed at CMS Press in 1846. In the light of these considerations, the inference of C.K. Moosad that the elongated form of the long vowel was in usage in the North and that Gundert was its originator does not appear to be correct. The elongated form was put into usage first by the CMS Press, Kottayam. It is one of the most valuable contributions to orthography and typography in Malayalam by the CMS Press.

Crescent Signs

The crescent sign is a symbol used to separate combination letters and to indicate incomplete verbs. Consonants in Malayalam have the presence of vowel. Using this symbol above the letter on the right hand side, this presence is deleted.

A special sign had not been used for the crescent symbol in *Jnananikshepam*. It was written with simple first vowel. The use of crescent prevalent now in the language was a product of Basel missionaries in Tellicherry²¹. Earlier both in ancient documents and in scribing u was used for even where crescent had to be used. George Mathen had argued that the usage of A alone was not appropriate in certain books printed later and that leaving ‘u’, which was the basis of the crescent and sticking to A manifested the indifference of the Europeans in the matter. This mistake probably happened due to the way it is pronounced (with an inhaling sound) and in Sanskrit there was no differentiation for u. Moreover, the sound value of the crescent sign is between the short and long A.²²

CMS Press had adopted a printing style regarding the letters with crescent. Basel Mission had used the crescent in their books

and when they did not use the crescent, they resorted to using 'u'. But CMS Press did not follow this practice immediately.

In the book 'Mathavicharam' (Inquiry into Religion), A is used where the crescent would have been more appropriate.

In 1863, the first copy of Malayalam (Malayanma) Grammar was printed at the CMS Press. George Mathen had considered using a special sign to denote the half sound (crescent). But in order to put his idea into practice suitable type of the new sign had to be moulded, which would have led to many inconveniences and much expenses. Therefore the effort was abandoned. Therefore like in Tamil tongue, the openly sounded letter was indicated by the closed half letter (crescent).

George Mathen had a personal rapport with Richard Collins. Mathen had also collaborated in the management of 'Vidyasamgraham' (1864). Probably due to these circumstances the half letter (closed) was indicated by the openly sounded letter. But in the religious text (catechism) printed at and published by CMS Press in 1867 the closed half letter is referred to by the first vowel sound (A). The Malayala Mithram' printed in the same press the first vowel sound (A) was used to denote the closed half letter sound (the crescent). But the 'Pothuvilulla Prarthanakal' (General Prayers) printed in 1889 contains only the first vowel letter. The openly sounded letter was absent. By 1900 the first vowel sound is completely removed from the place of closed sounding letter (crescent) and the openly sounded letter became the common usage.

In any case *Jnananikshepam* and the CMS Press made the crescent part of their orthography and typography quite late. If the differences between short and long vowels and the crescent were not available for usage, the limitations of a language could have been very inhibiting for communication. Printing the word for 'coat' is indicated by a word meaning 'basket'

and the term 'root' is expressed by the term for 'worm'. These limitations certainly adversely affect not only the beauty but the comprehension of meaning as well.

The Diversity and Strangeness of Words

The individuality of any language is decided by its wealth of vocabulary and grammar. The capability in communication using a language would continue to be enhanced by the development of its vocabulary. In situations where a language has to deal with many new ideas relating to science, technology, social life and religion new words appropriate to express these new concepts become necessary. There are several methods to form new words according to the need of the language. Some of these are: reform of terms based on meaning; acceptance of the modified usage of a foreign word or equivalents; generating new complete words by putting together existing words; translation of a word in the original language. In this process some words are taken from the other languages with which there is contact on the basis of comparison and similarity. Thus, through different ways new words were born in language; some words underwent changes in form and meaning; some others were interchanged like coins without any alteration; yet others might have later disappeared after being rejected. *Jnananikshepam* had used very many such words which demonstrate the birth and growth of language.

Chloroform, Coal, Rhinegun, English Company, Government, Engineer, Russia, France, Paris, Bombay, Parliament, Governor are some of these new words and there were many of them.

Some of these words like coal used typically Malayalam sounding terms later.

The word tea was initially 'te'. It also became a typically

Malayalam-sounding term eventually. Kerala was expressed as Malayalam. The name of Ram Mohun Roy was written in Malayalam as 'Ramovanarayan'.

Ostrich was first expressed in a term meaning running bird, eventually to become the camel bird. There were also 3 variations in writing England. The ship referred to with the word meaning the Fireship eventually became the steamship.

Jnananikshepam exhibited total indifference in the matter of conjunctions even while complete words were formed by adding several words together. There were also words with and without change in the shape of letters. The unsuitable usage of letters later disappeared. There were also words meaning water birds, running birds, fireship, chicken, warship and so on.

In order to describe the qualities of mirror and water the word meaning brightness was used and to express the sky a word denoting 'vastness' was used. *Jnananikshepam* had contained many words which were in use for general conversations as well as for presenting subjects of science and technology. Thus newspapers originate new words appropriate to the subject and time. This helps languages to flourish. *Jnananikshepam* was a noteworthy example of this phenomenon.

Structure of Sentence

Probably due to the influence of English or Sanskrit there was abundant usage of passive voice in the initial compositions of *Jnananikshepam*. Quite often its use had gone beyond limits as well. For example, the following sentence was written in Malayalam in this manner: "What we ask those people here who read this is that you compare the sayings and doings of the true incarnation that was Jesus Christ. He did not sin nor was any deceit found in him; he travelled doing good and driving out evil spirits" (Issue 4). Instead of adding when to the sound which

has no independent meaning but shows the relation between words, the Malayalam word meaning 'at least' was added in some places.²³

For example, "he will not insult nor harm anyone." In this at least has been used with the insult as well as harm.

'At least' has been also used twice in the sentence "Either send it to the Kottayam Printing Press or to Rev. John Hawksworth who resides at Thiruvalla."

The diversity in the structure of sentences is a specific quality of English prose. Modern Malayalam prose grew imitating the model of English prose. Therefore in *Jnananikshepam* which was among the first Malayalam prose compositions this diversity was visible.

In the 15th issue there were two sentences describing the significance of Christianity.

"The significant matter in Christianity was that man should abandon his sinful ways and should believe what had been revealed in Jesus Christ and that man cannot achieve salvation through his own efforts. Christians should love men of all castes and do good to them in order to become God who is love."

Punctuation

Punctuation developed along with the spread of prose. A.R. Rajaraja Varma says in 'Sahityasahyam' that "since those in the ancient days did not consider compositions in prose seriously, they did not arrange punctuations necessary for it." He had also instructed that such punctuations as comma, full stops should be suitably used in printed books. In 'Kerala Paniniyam' there is a special section describing the Malayalamization of the punctuations in English. Nevertheless, even when 'Sahityasahyam' was published in 1911 only seven punctuations

among the total of twelve were in use. Not all printers used the seven punctuations, either.

This was the general situation regarding punctuations in Malayalam prevalent then. However, the punctuations were put into practice from the very first issue of *Jnananikshepam*. According to A.R. Varma there were seven punctuations in Malayalam which did not include semicolon. This was also used in the first issue of *Jnananikshepam*.

The following punctuations also found usage in the first issue of *Jnananikshepam*: Full stop, semicolon, comma, interrogation point, dash and bracket. However the quotation marks were used in the second issue of the news magazine. Examples of this are found in the article “Regarding the two deaths alluded in the 4th issue”. (What is given below is its English translation.)

“The good result that occurred due to the death of the Christian priest was spiritually related. In a letter written by the sister of the priest it was mentioned that ‘spending the 20 days near our dear Henry was really beneficial and that God was glorified by praising my brother because although his death was a loss to us, to him it brought abundant blessings.’ Do the scientists have such comfort and hope?”

“When the owners of two properties quarrel regarding the trees grown on the border of the properties, the surveyor makes a demarcation to arrive at a decision. Similarly, punctuations are demarcations²⁴ to determine the position of sentences, which can be added to either part. The above cited quote is the demonstration of how the punctuations should be used clearly and suitably in Malayalam.

However in some compositions comma had been used, where full stop would have been the most suitable punctuation. It is not known whether it is done in advertence or with purpose.

The array of writers and the variety of compositions

In the initial issues of *Jnananikshepam* two categories of compositions were available. One, the literary works prepared under the responsibility of the editor; two, compositions written by others for publishing in *Jnananikshepam*.

In the introduction of *Jnananikshepam* published in Makaram (January) 1856, the following was observed: “86 issues of this magazine have been published earlier. The European who wrote them had worked here for many years, is not going to his own country.” From this it is clear that this was prepared in writing by the editor himself. There were also other compositions, which the editor John Hawksworth who was competent in Malayalam language, had translated into Malayalam as well as the translated works of indigenous missionaries like George Mathen and Koshy Koshy²⁵. In fact, first eight issues were full of compositions of similar nature. At a time when the writers of the land were skilled to write and speak only poetry, there was no other option other than this to publish a magazine in Malayalam prose.

The first composition from outside sources was published in the ninth issue of *Jnananikshepam*. It was a story regarding ‘Elephant and Thunnan’. Along with the title, the information ‘Received for publishing’ was printed. Headlines in words such as ‘Received for publication’, ‘Received from others for *Jnananikshepam*’, etc. were the style adopted by *Jnananikshepam* in the initial stages.

There are no literary works from outside in the tenth issue. In the eleventh issue there is a feature titled ‘Arivin Thulli’ (Drops of Knowledge), which consisted of questions and answers. These were questions of general knowledge and their answers

regarding stars and the sky. In the twelfth issue there is a literary piece with the title “A very big number for *Jnananikshepam*”. Next composition is in the eighteenth issue. Its title was “A Horoscope for *Jnananikshepam*. A dialogue between a Vedantin and a Hindu Scholar.” This continues in the nineteenth issue as well. Another feature accepted for publication is in the twenty sixth issue of *Jnananikshepam*, having the title: “The Dumb”. It continues also in the twenty seventh issue.

To write the prose needed to fill eight full pages by hand every month might have been quite a difficult task. It did not miss out even a single issue. The editor, Hawksworth probably had planned according to a strict schedule several issues beforehand. In the absence of this effort, it would have been impossible to bring out the magazine without missing a single issue. In the latter part of the 19th century as well as the first part of the 20th century, even private letters were written in verse. During this period, the poetry in comparison to prose was a serious threat to Malayalam journalism. In a statement written by the editor of Kerala Patrika, C. Kunjirama Menon for newspaper journalism (1912), the following was mentioned: “Among those who knew English some entertained a complex regarding writing in Malayalam and reading a Malayalam newspaper. They consider it an inferior practice. On the other hand those who knew Sanskrit and the local language were in the habit of writing only poems and thus were incapable of writing prose. The language of courts was not suitable for newspapers. Due to these reasons and the scarcity of articles, I had to face many difficulties in the beginning. Sometimes I had to rewrite the news letters and articles received from the villages in ordinary Malayalam. At certain times I was compelled to publish news letters written in verse.

Jnananikshepam, which was being published every month, was a great example of punctuality of the Englishman. It rendered

two significant services to Malayalees. One was moulding a large community of readers by giving them reading materials every month without fail. This paved the way for the reading habit of Malayalees. This news magazine published from Kottayam had great many readers not only in Travancore, but also in Kochi-Malabar areas as well as among people belonging to different communities. *Jnananikshepam* drew the special attention of the king of Travancore. Moreover, by the time the magazine had reached its sixth issue, its circulation increased so much that more paper became necessary. The increase in cost was met by adding the paper cost also to the printing cost. Because of the wide circulation among the readers of all sections, *Jnananikshepam* could meet all its expenses from the sale of the magazine at one copper coin (“Chakram”) per copy.

The second service was the encouragement and inspiration which *Jnananikshepam* gave to literary work in prose. Thus it created writers. It provided considerable inspiration and encouragement to exchange of views among the readers by publishing questions which needed to be answered by them, subjects for debate and inviting responses from the readers. And the literary contributions from the readers were published in the magazine with special titles. This encouraged readers to become writers. And those who wrote once were prompted to write again and again. The supplementary note by the editor published in the 68th issue (Mithunam (July) 1854) confirms and underlines this approach. “The Maharaja of Kochi has written again with love after writing in the 66th issue. He says that he would write in *Jnananikshepam* frequently. Hearing this makes us happy. Either he or someone else could explain how the Hindu way of life is better from the Muslim path and how it is better.”

Many people had contributed news and articles to *Jnananikshepam*. But as the names of the writers were absent, it was difficult to attribute the writings to someone correctly.

When allusions to writers had to be made, description than proper names were given, such as “the person who sent the letter given in the 66th issue” or “a follower of Hindu religion”²⁶ or “a Hindu scholar” or “a person from Kunnamkulangara” or “a friend from Kochi” and so on. In any case it can be assured that Hawksworth, George Mathen and Koshy Koshy often wrote in *Jnananikshepam*. The initial forms of several compositions and discussions which were later published in ‘Vidyasamgraham’ and other books could be found in the articles of *Jnananikshepam*. Write ups on subjects like rebirth, matriarchy, scientific knowledge, and technology probably belonged to George Mathen. Sri. K.M. Tharakan had pointed out that “many articles on the evils of matriarchy and rebirth had been written by George Mathen and published in magazines such as *Vidyasamgraham* and *Jnananikshepam*.”²⁷ We can also accept the testimony of Ulloor S. Parameswara Iyer that “other small essays which on different occasions, were published in *Jnananikshepam* and *Vidyasamgraham* could have been written by George Mathen.

As pointed out earlier, the literary efforts of George Mathen assumed book form from 1860 onwards. Exalted examples of prose appeared in *Jnananikshepam* during 1848-60. The authors of many of them might have been George Mathen and Koshy Koshy. From another perspective, *Jnananikshepam* was their training centre for the practical applications of the literary art of prose. The novel “Pullelikunju” of Koshy Koshy had begun to be serially published in *Jnananikshepam* from August 1860. However Koshy might have been a literary contributor to *Jnananikshepam* right from the beginnings of the news magazine. Rev. E.V. John had reported (in the Biography of Venerable K. Koshy D.D., the Mavelikkara Archdeacon, page 177) the testimony of Dr. Richardson that “His letters were often seen in the copies of *Jnananikshepam* of earlier days and in the first

numbers of ‘Malayala Mitram’.”

The Malayalam translation of the Proclamation of the British Queen announcing the transfer of governance from East India Company to British Government was published in the March issue of *Jnananikshepam*, 1859. The byline added below the translation was “Aymanam P. John has rendered the corrected translation of the Proclamation in English.” This implies that Aymanam P. John could have been a literary contributor to *Jnananikshepam*. When Henry Baker Junior was the editor of *Jnananikshepam*, he might have written many compositions for the news magazine. Henry Baker was a natural scientist and a member of the Royal Zoological Society. He wrote articles on general and scientific matters, for which the wife of Baker Junior provided appropriate graphic pictures. In the beginning of 1860 the entire South was in the grip of cholera. The mission territory of Bakers, Mundakkayam was also seriously affected by the disease. Baker who was also a competent physician, wrote several articles on the medical treatment of diseases like cholera and others. These can be read in the February-March issues of 1860. As indicated earlier, very many people had made general and specific literary contributions in the form of news, articles, and other works from different parts of Kerala. But it is difficult to recognize them by name.

Just as there is diversity among the writers, there is also variety in the literary compositions of *Jnananikshepam*. In other words, the compositions in *Jnananikshepam* is not uniform.

There are literary contributions in the form of questions and answers (e.g. ‘Drops of Knowledge’ in issues 11, 12, 1849 – month Kanni and Thulam – October) and in the category of discussions (A Horoscope for *Jnananikshepam*’ issue 18, Medam – May 1850).

Another cluster of compositions is conversations. The first

of these kinds of contributions appeared in the magazine under the title 'Features of Property' in issue 20, Midhunam 1850. The conversation takes place between people, Ram and Varghese regarding the features of a substance. This composition which is in the mode of scientific knowledge, speaks of six attributes of a substance such as area, shape, separation, inertia and attraction.

Story telling like the 'Tale of the Elephant and Taylor' (issue 9, Karkkadakam 1849) and narrations found a place in *Jnananikshepam* right from the beginning. 'Kalla' in the 3rd issue of Makaram (January), 1849 is a descriptive composition. There are many literary works, which clarify matters through elucidation, description and narration. These styles have been followed in compositions of scientific and historical subjects. There was also a travelogue under the headline 'News of Two Parsee who went to England from Bombay by Ship' (issue 2, Dhanu (January) 1848). As usual it is a narration with autobiographical elements.

The diversity of news style in *Jnananikshepam* also merits attention.

In short, conversation, discussion, elucidation, description, narration, analysis etc. which formed the basis for the skill in prose literature that developed later took shape and improved in the issues of *Jnananikshepam*. The history of Malayalam prose is quite short. And the compositions in *Jnananikshepam* represent the most significant stage of this short span. The unceasing efforts and experiments of the Malayalam prose to achieve a definite standard and maturity can be observed in the pages of *Jnananikshepam*. As the first printed tool, the language researchers have put aside *Jnananikshepam* from the studies related to the language of prose. Undoubtedly this is either due to ignorance or the paucity of knowledge in the matter. This had brought

about a situation in which both ordinary people and many scholars became ignorant of these beautiful flowers of modern Malayalam prose. It also led to the decision of determining the birth date of modern Malayalam prose as the day after the establishment of Travancore Textbook Committee. It can be assumed here that even the recorded statement of Ulloor S. Parameswara Iyer regarding the nobility of prose literature in *Jnananikshepam* did not attract the attention of these people²⁸. That was probably the reason behind the lament of Thomas Paul regarding the backwardness of Malayalam prose. "At this time of the appointment as the President of Travancore Book Committee in 1942, what was the situation of Malayalam prose! If some translations of European priests and preachers of Christian religion as well as the Sanskrit rich commentaries of Kerala scholars are exempted, there were only the Malayalam drama by Thunchath Ezhuthachan or the 'Origin of Kerala' or 'The Important Teachings of Esope' by Aripattu Kochu Pilla Variar, as examples of Malayalam prose. Till then Malayalam prose did not have any definite style nor rule. The simple, yet beautiful 'Balabhushanam' of Pachu Muthath came into being in the year Book Committee was founded. The Book Committee which was founded during such a situation, brought out, under the presidentship of Valiya Koithampuran, the amazing 'Bhashaposhanam' which was indescribably valuable" ('Sahitya Pranayikal', Part 3). Thomas Paul did not, unfortunately, pay attention to *Jnananikshepam*, which was a fertile pasture for variety and diversity of subjects in prose composition. Obviously one should not belittle the achievements which the Travancore Book Committee and Keralavarma Valiya Koithampuran had notched up for Malayalam prose, either. Nevertheless, it is also not correct not to assign an exalted place and value to *Jnananikshepam*, which was, in many ways, an inspiration and model for even the Thampuran. Dr Sukumar

Azhicode has this to say: “Prose lives in common man’s universe of discourse. Prose requires wings to fly into that world. Newspaper is a newspaper. It is the wings that helps prose to fly into the ordinary world.”²⁹ *Jnananikshepam* was the first wing obtained for modern Malayalam prose.

Notes

- 1 Dr. N. Sam, *Op.cit.* p.164.
- 2 *Paschimodayam* No.1, 1847 October.
- 3 Ettumanoor K.N. Sankara Pillai, Malayalam Language and Prose-Poetry Literature, Bhasha Poshini 27, Issue 4, 1098 Vrishchikam, p.179.
- 4 Dr. K. Raghavan Pillai, Contribution of Kerala Varma Valia Koi Thampuran to Malayalam Prose, Bhashaposhini 6, issue 5, Feb-March 1983, p.92.
- 5 “The oral language is the basis of written language.” John Macy, ‘The Story of the World’s Literature’, p.17.
- 6 Dr. Samuel Chandanappally, *Study of the Works of Rev. George Mathen*, p.117.
- 7 *Ibid.* p.129.
- 8 Kerala Varma Valiya Koi Thampuran was born in A.D.1845.
- 9 Dr. P.J. Thomas, *Ibid.* p.235, 236 (December ed.)
- 10 *History of Kerala Literature* Vol.4, p.159.
- 11 *Malayalam Literature and Christians*, 1989, p.496.
- 12 C. Sankunni Nair, Bhashaposhini 23, issue 11, 12, 1094 Mithunam, Karkkadakam, p.423.
- 13 *Malayalam Literature and Christians*, 1989, p.353.
- 14 *Ibid.* p.388.
- 15 *Ibid.* p.504.
- 16 In the masthead of *Jnananikshepam*, year is given in English style and month in Malayalam.
- 17 A.D. Harisarma, ‘Kandathil Varghese Mappila’, Malayala Manorama, Kottayam, 1987, p.154.
- 18 Bhashaposhini 1069, Chingam 2, issue 2, p.13.
- 19 Bhashaposhini 1087, 16, issue 1, p.36, 37.
- 20 C.K. Moosad, English-Malayalam Dictionary of Bailey, *Jnananikshepam*-Bailey Souvenir, 1973, p.81.

- 21 “It is uniformly the orthography in books printed at Tellicherry by the Germal missionaries, for they have ‘u’ in all cases where the semi-circular mark, lately invented by them, is not used.” George Mathen, Preface to ‘Malayalamayude Vyakaranam’, second ed. 1969, SPCS, Kottayam, p.15.
- 22 *Ibid.* p.13.
- 23 “This use seems to have come from the basic (old) Malayalam language. It is evident in the judgment prepared by Judge Devan Padmanabhan in 1812 in the Travancore Hajur Court.” Dr. K. Godavarma, ‘Prabandha Samaharam’.
- 24 A.R. Rajaraja Varma, ‘Kerala Sahityam’, (Kerala Literature), Kerala Sahitya Academy, Thrissur, 1989, p.184.
- 25 Even before the publication of *Jnananikshepam* commenced, John Hawksworth had translated several small compositions into Malayalam, which was done by George Mathen and K. Koshy. This is reported in the letter sent by George Mathen on April 17th 1846 to Madras Corresponding Committee and also by V.T. David in his book ‘History of Travancore-Kochi Anglican Church’.
- 26 Issue 72, 1854 Thulam. The following murder, vomiting and dysentery have been sent by a Hindu.
- 27 Introduction to Malayazhmayude Vyakaranam (The Grammar of Malayalam).
- 28 Kerala Sahitya Charitram Vol.4.
- 29 Kerala Sahitya Padanangal (Studies in Kerala Literature), D.C. Books, Kottayam, 1986, p.326-327.

IV

PEOPLE'S NEWSPAPER AND
KING'S GAZETTE**Was *Jnananikshepam* a Newspaper?**

Or, was it important only as a magazine printed at and published by the Printing Press at Kottayam, being a part of missionary work? Was it a vain attempt to attribute the features of a newspaper to an old publication by the historians, who had gone in search of the beginning of the newspaper phenomenon, when journalism and newspaper publishing had been well developed?

No.

Clearly and distinctly *Jnananikshepam* was indeed a newspaper.

A factual scrutiny would reveal that *Jnananikshepam* was the first newspaper in Malayalam. *Rajyasamacharam* and *Paschimodayam* published before it were only the earlier examples of journals.

If a journal was called a newspaper, it should have had some attributes which make it a newspaper. First of all the publication should have adopted 'reporting' as its main purpose. Both *Rajyasamacharam* and *Paschimodayam* had not done this. *Jnananikshepam*, on the other hand, had accepted disclosing news as the first and foremost mission. "The title '*Rajyasamacharam*' itself does not indicate this meaning. It is not our role to inform news that happens in every country. And we are not going to

report the news of the country of Malayalam, either." This was the basic approach of *Rajyasamacharam*. The approach of *Paschimodayam* was as follows: "It is the way of Western knowledge to understand the minute details of times and places and disseminate them in prose for the benefit of readers. If there are people who are interested in reading these matters, we would obtain them from Western scientific sources and print them according to the need of Malayalam and send them to them." To put it differently, its aim was to spread Western scientific knowledge. Reporting news was not included in its objective. Describing an event or expressing an opinion on a matter or clarifying an issue would fall under the ambit of news. But some write ups in these lines were also found in *Rajyasamacharam* and *Paschimodayam*. Nevertheless they cannot be placed under the category of newspapers on the basis of such sporadic news coverage. In the introduction to *Jnananikshepam*, however, it was clearly asserted that "the magazine will contain regional and foreign news." And news was the main topic in every issue of *Jnananikshepam*. In selected issues, 'European News' and 'Indian News' were categorised and published.

Another factor in considering the periodical *Jnananikshepam* as a newspaper was the awareness of the publishers that they were indeed publishing a newspaper. The publishers of *Rajyasamacharam* and *Paschimodayam* did not appear to have that kind of perception about their journals. But the publishers of *Jnananikshepam* were crystal clear about their objective.

The issue of August 1860 of *Jnananikshepam* carries the news of the death of the King Marthanda Varma as its first report, which appeared as follows: "The reputed happenings in the country would be known to all before the monthly newspaper *Jnananikshepam* reaches them. Nevertheless, we inform with great regret the passing away of our king ruler Marthanda Varma

on August 18th and share in the great grief that has engulfed the people.”

The statement that ‘news would be known to all people before *Jnananikshepam* reaches them’ is an exaggeration at a time in the 19th century when communication infrastructure was greatly limited. Apart from one or two news of high visibility which people knew, majority of news reached the people through the medium of *Jnananikshepam*, especially in the matter of national and international happenings.

In the news alluded to earlier it is stated with certainty without any doubt that *Jnananikshepam* was a newspaper. On other occasions also *Jnananikshepam* had pointed out that it was the only news magazine in Travancore. (Read the news story ‘Newspapers’ in September issue of 1860.)

Two factors are paramount in fulfilling the objectives as a newspaper. One is periodicity and second is mass productivity, implying the capability to produce a definite number of copies within a specified time. Both these benefits became available to the publication of newspapers with the introduction of modern printing method. From this point of view, *Jnananikshepam* was the first printed newspaper in Malayalam. This is a fact of great importance in the history of Malayalam journalism.

Great developments in style and technology notwithstanding the basic components that make news reporting meaningful and comprehensive do not change. These fundamentals have been expanded into six ‘W’s, that is, Who, What, Where, When, Why and How. If any one of them was absent in a news report, it would be an incomplete news coverage. The editor of *Jnananikshepam* was uncompromising in following these fundamental principles. the following news story is an example of this strict approach.

The Great Brawl at Kochi

“A great brawl took place at Palliport, near Kochi on Sunday, 24th June. The quarrel took place between the monopoly lease holder of Government land, Vernid, the European and his such lease holders. The European had leased the land, which was already leased to some, to others due to the quarrel. This led to arguments between the servants of the European and the sub-lease holders, which ended up in a fight. Twenty one lease holders were hurt in the skirmish, receiving serious injuries. The condition of two of them was known to be critical and one of them died.” (July 1860).

The News about Earthquake and the Earthquake in the news

In the beginning of the third millennium news about earthquakes had filled the pages of newspapers in Kerala. People of Kerala were agitated over small and large earthquakes which occurred in different parts of the state. Some people were quite anxious because such a phenomena had not happened earlier. However, the truth of the matter is that earthquakes have indeed happened several times earlier in Kerala.

Earthquakes in Travancore State

Between 11th and 22nd of last August, earthquake rocked several districts in the state. These districts were Thiruvananthapuram, Koothalam, Kollam, Kottayam and several other areas. Many people from the North-Eastern regions heard a sound similar to that of the running of a train, and when it came near there happened as if the trembling of the body when a boat gets stuck in the sand. People who were sleeping woke up afraid. In the observatory, established by the deceased king of Thiruvananthapuram, have evidences

regarding the force of the earthquake and other details.

There was a disastrous earthquake in Naples in the month of Chingam, 1851. This news was carried two months later by *Jnananikshepam* in its issue of Vrischikam, 1851. The report of this earthquake is another example of the reporting style of *Jnananikshepam*.

“On Chingam 14th there was a very great earthquake in Naples, which destroyed majority of the houses. In an area over 700 people and in another area 3000 people died. As the earthquake occurred all of a sudden, people had no time to escape from their houses. Nearly 50 villages bore the brunt of the disaster and many things all over the country were devastated. Naples lies near Rome, towards the South of Italy. The region between Rome and Naples is filled with the smell of sulphur. The large volcano known as Vesuvius is in Naples. Sulphur always burns inside the volcano.” (Issue 37, Vrischikam, 1851)

In this news story there is a delay in time between an event and reporting that event. Probably due to this R. Radhakrishnan in his ‘The Story of the Press in Kerala’ had observed that *Jnananikshepam* published news that are a little old. However the period we are talking about is not 1950, but 1850. Electric bulb was invented only towards the end of the 19th century. Neither train nor telegraph had arrived in Kerala then. But in these days of telephone and fax describing news as ‘fresh as the fish from the water’ would be appreciated. But in 1850 news was not like salted fish; but could only be like salt. Like today, there was not enough news that could be gathered from the neighbourhood. Therefore news had to be sourced from the East, West and South. And how were there news becoming available? By means of ships and bullock carts. In such circumstances the options available to the editor was either to through out the ‘old news’

or to present them in a way that would be appealing. Look at the earlier news story on earthquake. It narrated not only the earthquake but also depicted the geography of Naples and the burning sulphur within the Vesuvius volcano.

Besides news about earthquakes, *Jnananikshepam* had also published other stories. These news descriptions regarding social reformation and civil rights had helped a great deal in generating popular awareness and promotion of ideals propagated by the newspaper.

People belonging to different strata of society became the readers of *Jnananikshepam* openly and in private because they had become aware of the relevance of the contents of the news magazine to their daily lives. It is this welcome acceptance of the newspaper which compelled them to increase the number of printed copies after publication of just six issues. The news magazine could also meet its expenses from the circulation revenues without any advertisements, and thus survived for three decades.

People’s Newspaper

A great number of people were readers of *Jnananikshepam*. Some of them, eventually, became writers without an interview or an appointment order. Several of them transformed themselves into regional correspondents. The editor of *Jnananikshepam* recognised and honoured them and also encouraged them to pursue writing. Thus *Jnananikshepam* developed a string of correspondents – one writer from Kunda Kulangara, a friend from Cochin, a scientist, a Hindu with an open mind and so on.

News and comments that focus on social welfare and civil rights abound in *Jnananikshepam*. *Jnananikshepam* dares to write about many things which a newspaper functioning under the

autocratic rule of the king as well as British Company would be afraid to disclose. Some examples are quoted below:

People and Regulations

“The Pope has returned to Rome. Some opine that people are happy about it; but others say that it was for another competition. Pope stopped the printing and sale of the Word of God. He appears to be afraid of the Book. Why? When do the Tahasildars show fear to read regulations?” (Issue 23, Kanni, 1850)

In this context one might remember that Regulations of Travancore, Royal proclamations and other official communicate which the people ought to know were regularly published in *Jnananikshepam*.

Price Rise and Complaints

“Since two the price of paddy and other food materials had gone up and this has led to a spate of complaints.” (Issue 11, November, 1856)

This issue also carries the increase in the rate of wages and prices in the years 1845 (1020) and 1855 (1030).

	1020 (1845)	1030 (1855)
10 Parch (a measure of volume)	30 Chakram (old copper coin)	80 Chakram
100 Coconut	18 Chakram	50 Chakram
Daily Wage	1¾ Chakram	3 Chakram
A day's work (Thachu)	4 Chakram	7 Chakram

Law and Order Collapse in Travancore

Recently several murders have taken place in the Travancore State. Some time ago there ensued a quarrel regarding tobacco.

One Muslim received injuries and while running away to his house, he died as well. Two groups of people went to harvest the paddy field at Pulimkunnu village. A person of one group killed three Nairs of the other group by stabbing. Later the killer committed suicide also by stabbing. A Christian belonging to Kottayam was very cruelly assassinated by a group of people. But now the murder was owned up by a Pariah (lower caste).” (Issue 18, June 1857)

Religious Ceremony and Railways

“Steam train is now running in Bombay on iron tracks. The people there are very much elated seeing the steam train. The people had heard about it earlier; but had not till now seen it. If a steam engine is made to run between Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam it would be very beneficial. The money spent on religious ceremonies like 56 days ‘Murajapam’ would be sufficient for the purpose.” (Issue 44, Mithunam 1852)

The indication in the news is that using the money spent for ‘Murajapam’ for laying the rail tracks would be helpful for the welfare of the people. Today there was no scarcity for religious ceremonies, festivals and fireworks. But is it possible to express a courageous opinion of this kind today?

Obtain receipt from Postman

“When letters and parcels are entrusted to the Government post for despatch, a receipt from the postman must be obtained. A packet entrusted to a postman at Kottayam has been sent to the Dewan's office.” (Issue 3, Makaram 1849)

Jnananikshepam not only castigated the irresponsible officials, but it also had good words about competent officers. The news story about a ‘good Tahasildar’ in the 9th issue (Karkidakam 1849) is a perfect example of this.

“Some seven to eight months earlier, the Tahasildar Kali Pillai was, on his own request, transferred from Thiruvalla Mandathuvathukkal to Kunnathur. The people had regarded him as an honest and competent officer. Most of them are of the view that his transfer was a very unfortunate event.”

The Gazette of the King

Jnananikshepam was also the Gazette of the king, just as it was a people's newspaper. It printed the Government proclamations and regulations for the benefit of the people. The purpose of it was to create awareness among the people than to help the Government.

Right from the beginning itself, one or two pages towards the end were set apart for printing regulations. The first issue contains the 6th regulation enacted by Travancore State in 1010. The regulation 9th of March 1835 was published with an introduction.

The regulation enacted in the Malayalam era 1010 was the first collection of laws of Travancore. Swati Thirunal who was the king and ruler during that period established Munsif Courts to prosecute petty civil cases and police cases. In 1008 he put an end to Dewan's court and established a District Court in its place. When courts were established, the need for laws arose. With the support of the then resident Casamaiger, a Tahsildar of Malabar area named Ittirariachan Kandappan Menon – Kadam Menon was appointed in 1010 as Dewan Peshkar. Without further delay he set about to writing a Code. This Code consisted of 8 regulations. In the year 1011 these regulations came into force. In the Government press at Thiruvananthapuram in those days, the regulations were printed at CMS Press and in 1014 (1839) were proclaimed as the law. The first five regulations of this Code

(8 chapters) describe the laws and procedures regarding civil matters; the sixth regulation delineates the powers of the Police given to Tahasildar as well as the criminal jurisdiction of courts. Seven and eight chapters empower the Judges of Appeal Courts to fulfil the duties of Sessions Court. This is the first regulation of Travancore. Although the regulations have subsequently been amended, the basic foundation of the laws of Travancore remain these regulations. In order to implement these laws, the king appointed Bhagavanta Rao, who was rendering service as Munsif in Malabar as the first Judge of the Court of Appeal.

Jnananikshepam had published the copies of 6, 7, 1 regulations of the Travancore Code. The 6th regulation was begun publication in issue No.1 (Vrischikam 1848) and completed in the Issue No.24 in Thulam 1850. Publication of the 7th commenced in issue 25th (Vrischikam 1850) and ended in Issue No.39 (Makaram 1852). The first regulation began to be published in Issue No.40 (Kumbham 1852) and was completed in the 85th issue (Vrischikam 1855). *Jnananikshepam* ended the publication of regulations with the announcement of a warning to the Musif that they would be punished if they misappropriate any of the funds of the Treasury. Till then copies of the regulation are present in most of the issues. Exemption was very rare – that too only when most important news had to be reported. Up to Karkkadakam 1855 there were 81 issues. Only 15 of them did not carry details of regulation.

Another important feature of *Jnananikshepam* was proclamations and orders of the Government. Their publication was timely and they were brought to the attention of the public. There were very important royal proclamations such as abolition of bonded labour, which had far reaching consequences. Had they not been published in *Jnananikshepam*, their awareness among the general public would have been

very limited. The flip side to this scenario is that they were proclamations, which did not get adequate publicity due to the influence of vested interests.

On the 21st of Vrischikam 1849, the king issued a proclamation which was published by *Jnananikshepam* in its 3rd issue (Makaram 1849). During those days the lands and forests and everything in them belonged to the king. If the people wanted to construct a house or erect a cattle shed, wood was required. But to cut trees around where they lived they had to make an appeal to the Diwan for the purpose. But the orders passed by Diwan in this matter were not implemented satisfactorily. Even where the orders were positive, obstacles were created in their correct fulfilment. This led to widespread difficulties for people. When the king became aware of this he issued the new proclamation.

If the orders issued by the king were derailed due to the harmful (to people) machinations and designs of the officials, what purpose does the orders serve?

The 42nd issue of the newspaper (Medam 1852) carries the 519th police order passed by Diwan Krishnarayar on March 6th 1852 (1027) with the title “The order given to every house at Mandavathu recently”. In this order stringent warning was given to those who harm the people of an entire area by putting them in jail in the name of criminal acts such as murder, suicide, robbery, etc. taking place there. This was another clear example of the influence *Jnananikshepam* exerted in the formation of a modern civic society.

This order issued on March 6th, 1027 by Diwan Krishnarayar remained valid and relevant not only during the erstwhile royal rule, but also pertinent to any social set up that would emanate in a democracy. And *Jnananikshepam* had recognized this truth.

The Travancore king had proclaimed three royal declarations in the year 1853, 1854 and 1855 which were of paramount importance to the abolition of bonded labour. These royal pronouncements paved the way for the fundamental changes in the then existing social relationships. Naturally they had caused considerable anguish to the owners of the slaves.

Jnananikshepam published the declaration of Sri. Padmanabhadasa Vanchi Bala Marthanda Varma, King of Travancore in issue No.62 (Dhanu 1853). See appendix 9. This declaration was the result of considerable thought in ensuring that the situation of slaves should not do any harm to the tenants of the land.

Another proclamation was published as the 32nd number on Kanni 30th, 1029 (1854). However Uthram Thirunal proclaimed yet another declaration of freedom to slaves on the 12th of Mithunam, 1855. While issuing this proclamation the ruler had said the following: “We are of the view that the condition of the slaves in our land must be good and that these slaves also should enjoy the benefits which the bonded labour of the company have. The declaration No.32 does not fully ensure this. Therefore we are abrogating this declaration and after correcting its deficiencies, issuing another declaration.”

However officials and other interested parties did not give sufficient publicity to the proclamation of freedom to the bonded labour. P. Bhaskara Unni says the following regarding this unfortunate situation: “The sad truth about the freedom proclamation was that the beneficiaries of the proclamation were unaware of the declaration.”¹ To this must be added a similar opinion expressed by Henry Baker (Junior) in 1854. He had expressed his view that although Travancore Government had abolished the system of bonded labour, it was not promulgated

in the normal manner and therefore Baker printed some copies of it and distributed them; and that the owners of the bonded labourers requested him not to circulate the declaration. It is in these circumstances that *Jnananikshepam* published the declaration in the issue 81 in the month of Karkkadakam 1855.

As a matter of fact Travancore ruler promulgated the declaration of freedom not to improve the situation of the slaves but due to the pressure from the Company. Even then the paramount consideration was that the tenants of the lands should not come to any harm. For that reason the proclamation of 1028 and 1029 did not have the desired effect. *Jnananikshepam*, however, recognized the limitations of the proclamations and criticized the flaws in them in a strong language. And the news periodical went on to publish the king's proclamation giving freedom to the slaves in its issue No.62, in the month of Dhanu 1853. In the very next issue (Issue No.63, Makaram 1854) it published an article with the title, 'The Slave'. The article was voice demanding human rights for the slaves. It also argued that the option available to the slave to air his grievances to the authority of Mandapathum Vathikkal was an impractical one. The article also strongly contended that the king should provide freedom to the slave to work under any master he may wish.

Jnananikshepam also contains other proclamations such as the 'Pepper Announcement' of Thulam 30th, 1036 (November 13th, 1860) published in the issue of November 1860; and the proclamation by Diwan Madhavarayar on Vrischikam 22nd, 1036 (December 5, 1860).

Besides the proclamations of the Travancore Government, the proclamations of the Government of India were also published in *Jnananikshepam*. Some examples of these are: the announcement of the Governor General which annexed the

'Punjab desam' company to the state as well as the proclamation of the British Queen taking away the authority to rule India from the East India Company.

The Diversity in Style of News Reporting

How a news story is presented is equally important as the content of the news. The diversity in presentation style arises in responses to the question of how. The journalist of today who has seen new wave and investigative journalism would certainly welcome diversity in the presentation of news. There are several styles which are in vogue. For instance, direct and indirect reporting, witness description, news analysis, criticism, story telling, dramatic presentation and so on. Majority of the news presentation styles in vogue today were also in use in *Jnananikshepam*.

A good example of the witness narration is the story titled "Catching a Crocodile" by a local correspondent. This news story sent to *Jnananikshepam* was carried by it in the 73rd issue (Vrischikam 1854). "Last month 3 to 4 kms towards the north on the east side of the river near the bathing ghat one crocodile attacked one or two people and several cows. The people in the vicinity brought some boatmen to catch the crocodile, who set a trap with an ox. But the crocodile swallowed the bull. While many people watched the commotion created in the water by the swallowing act, several boatmen in six boats went close by and threw nearly 8 javelins at the water creature and pulled it to the land. Immediately I measured the creature and found that its head alone was 3 feet long. And its body was as large as its head and long tail put together. Its width was as appropriate to its length. When its body was split open, we found two leg bones of man, a stock of hair, a knife with its scabbard, six silver rings and forty eight stones of different sizes and shapes in its stomach."

An example of the news story style is the news about 'Destruction of a Ship' published in the issue No.71, Kanni 1854. The story is about an Arab named Abdulla bin Narum who was living in the market area of Kochi. He had built a ship weighing about 30,000 tonnes, and was sent to Bombay filled with merchandise. But in its first trip itself it was greatly damaged.

In the issue of December 1860 *Jnananikshepam* has a news story with the title: 'The heinous action of Bava'. This story combines the styles of news analysis and criticism styles of reporting. The story contains news and the event which is the basis of the news. The news narrates the event in which Mar Kurilos Bava took the Book of Gospels from one of the parishioners in the Church at Niranam, threw it down on the ground, spat and stepped on it. The complaint of the Bava is that the Protestants have translated the Scripture in a mistaken manner and thus perpetrated a deception by printing it. The matter is analysed as follows. Bava said that in Matthew's gospel, chapter three, fourth verse the translation of 'locusts' was wrong and that the correct translation should have been 'a kind of tuber'. The apostles wrote the gospels in Greek language. In Matthew's gospel the term used was 'Akrides', the meaning of which was locusts; it has no other meaning. In the language of Syriac with which the Bava is familiar, the word used is 'Kamsa'. This also has the meaning locusts as is evident from the verses 21, 22 of the chapter eleven of Leviticus.

Jnananikshepam contains many news stories which could be described as development and economic growth. The introduction of steam engine pulled trains and the setting up of Telegraph have been already pointed out elsewhere. The issue of June 1860 carries a news item under the headline 'Good Happenings'. Its content elucidates the development activities

that had taken place in Travancore. "The people of Travancore are happy about the works which are going on for the good of the State. A royal road is being constructed from Kottayam to Tamilnadu. While this work progresses rapidly, a canal is being built from Kanyakumari to Thiruvananthapuram, which would extend up to seven miles close to Thiruvananthapuram. The construction of this canal is estimated to cost Rs.3 lakhs. This canal would be greatly beneficial to agriculturists, who had found it difficult to irrigate the rice fields, particularly during summer in areas like South Njanjada." The November issue of 1860 portrays a clear picture of Export from in the news item titled 'Cochin Port'. "In the past year from Chingam up to Edavam the following goods have been shipped from Kochi: arrowroot 3423 pound weight; arrowroot powder 8904; arecanut 18851; wax 399; bones 1113; coffee 75632; coir 934479; coconut 1705921 nos; dried kernel of coconut (copra) 232596; cardamom 203; cotton 3080; chilly 2366; dried ginger 67242; coconut fibre 30590; ginger 3031; horse gram; ivory 70; nutmeg 1351; nut of nux vomica 9569; coconut oil 852929; fish oil 241990; pepper 49126; salt 175; turmeric 6650; tobacco 6398; wheat 338100; potato 8050; rosewood planks 29981; wasted boards 1012600; useless wood 23317."

'Thirumala devan' is a good example of investigative news reporting (Issue 53, Meenam 1853). This elaborate news story was concerned with the theft of the icon of Konkinidevan (Thirumaladevan) which was kept in Alapuzha. The story provides details about the history of the statue, the circumstances in which it was taken around in the two states (Travancore and Kochi) and finally its theft from Alapuzha. The event had great historical and political significance. Therefore the subsequent issues of the news magazine also carried periodical news about Thirumaladevan. *Jnananikshepam* had two

more news stories which were spread over several issues. One was about the discovery of gold; and the other was concerned with the Sepoy Mutiny. (The news which have been published in *Jnananikshepam* had been elaborately described in the chapters on Microscope and Telescope of this book.)

There were also curiosity-generating news stories in *Jnananikshepam*. On such story was about a low caste woman giving birth to three babies (issue 84, Thulam 1855).

In a limited manner, letters to editor had also found a place in *Jnananikshepam*. Such letters were either published as letters or as news, depending on their nature. For example, in issue No.70 of Chingam 1854, there is a letter to editor from a reader of the Hindu. Similarly there is a note sent from Kochi on June 11, 1858. This was published in the July issue. It was an epistle written by an employee of East India Company, who was attacked by anti-social elements at Chowra near Aluva.

The editorial is an unavoidable component of contemporary newspapers. But *Jnananikshepam* did not have regular editorials. But whenever the newspaper was compelled to share its policy or working with the readers, it did write editorials. Under the title of preface or foreword, it was carried by the newspaper as the most important news item of a particular issue, in which it appeared. The preface of the first issue was the editorial of that issue. As a matter of fact the news of the seventh issue of *Jnananikshepam* was also an editorial, the content of which was the honour accorded to the newspaper by the king as well as the increase in circulation. The editorial of the 68th issue (Mithunam 1854) admits that the newspaper was always happy to hear from its readers; that is to say, *Jnananikshepam* welcomed whatever the readers contributed by way of writing. The issue 1 of Makaram 1856 has the change that occurred in the editorship

of the newspaper, in its editorial. It writes about the services rendered by John Hawksworth who was the founder editor of *Jnananikshepam* and was its editor till then. Another editorial was about the king of Travancore in the issue of January 1858. The initial part of it was as follows: "His Highness the king of Travancore was glad to learn that the news and instructions appearing in *Jnananikshepam*, which was printed at the press in Kottayam and that they contained drawings to demonstrate what had been written, all of which have been beneficial to the people. In response the king has sent his own image drawn on ivory in colours to *Jnananikshepam*. This picture of His Highness has been printed in the *Jnananikshepam* of this month, which we hope will lead to all round praise of the people. It is generally accepted that the king takes great interest in carrying out the welfare of the people..."

News coverage has always been differentiated as regional, national or international on the basis of its depth, the event which is its source and the place of the event. A newspaper ought to have news, which include these three components of news. Today's news dailies have a page or pages devoted to each of these components. There is also an account of space devoted to each of them. This categorization of news is one of the fundamental principles of journalism. *Jnananikshepam* had given strict attention to this principle in carrying news in every one of its issues.

Jnananikshepam was able to fulfil its commitment in a disciplined manner in publishing a newspaper. The competence achieved by CMS Press in modern printing was greatly supportive to its periodical publication as well as the creation of its design. The visionary approach of the publishers of the magazine enriched its contents from different points of view. And it led to diversity in styles and gave dimensions to its news reporting.

Right from the beginning, *Jnananikshepam* had paid undivided attention in observing the basic principles of journalism. The diverse styles which *Jnananikshepam* had used in news reporting are the same techniques that later Malayalam newspapers had adopted and in use even today. To put it differently, Malayalam newspapers progressed by walking on the path opened by this newspaper. Yes, the predecessor of contemporary newspapers in Malayalam is *Jnananikshepam*.

Notes

1 Kerala of 19th Century.

V

DISSEMINATION OF GENERAL KNOWLEDGE; PROMOTION OF SCIENCE

19th century was a period of scientific and technological discoveries. The findings which enriched the material aspect of human life and revolutionized the circumstances in which man lived were the contribution of this period in history. The inventions of this time included Railways, Telegraph, Radio, Spinning machines, artificial colours and so on. This was also the phase in which lone travellers visited countries they had only heard and read about before. Several commercial organisations and empire builders and kings intervened to bring distant communities and countries closer to make the world a global village. All these were made possible by the new discoveries in communication technology and transport. *Jnananikshepam* comprehended the valuable impact these changes would make on the social life of the people and informed them to its readers. In the news story on 'Steam Engines' in the issue No.10 of Chingam 1849, the magazine had written: "When steam engines begin their travel, the distance between towns seems to disappear. If a steam engine runs from Kochi to Chennai, Malayalees can reach Chennai within a day."

Jnananikshepam was eager to reach in time the news regarding the discoveries which were taking place literally on a daytoday basis to its readers. And it went beyond merely providing news.

With committed attention and care it elucidated scientific principles, the functioning of divergent technological equipments and scientific experiments and thus carried out dissemination of general knowledge among people. And to individuals like Kerala Varma Valia Koithampuran¹, who adopted prose as the medium for spreading general knowledge, the many scientific essays and similar write up in *Jnananikshepam* undoubtedly became a guide and example to emulate.

Science in Practice

The ideal way to generate scientific awareness among people is to put science to practical applications. The issue No.14 of Dhanu 1849 has published an experiment under the title ‘a new motion’ that is worth reading. “Some time ago, a person dried some soil. Two hundred pounds of it was kept in a vessel and irrigated with rain water (only). Thereafter he planted a tender plant in it and irrigated with rain water (only) and nurtured it. After five years the plant was removed from the soil and dried. When the dried soil was weighed, it was found, its weight was ten tolas more from the previous weight. And the plant was weighed and found that its weight was 119 pounds. This meant that the plant had increased its weight 114 pounds more than earlier. Where did extra weight come from? Did the rain water become wood?”

Discoveries

Jnananikshepam provided timely information regarding most small and big scientific discoveries to its readers.

In the issue No.17 of Meenam 1850 a news item under the headline ‘Discoveries’, the discoveries of Chloroform and rock oil are mentioned. Chloroform is a kind of water. Smelling it, one loses consciousness. Its use lies in making pain absent while

cutting flesh and bones. Rock oil was found in France, at a place called ‘Othanga’ from a huge rock. It is told that a kind of oil (chenchalyam) can be made out of it.

Issue 19 of July 1857 narrates how Chloroform which was discovered only 4 to 5 years earlier reached Kerala. A special steam medicine known as ‘chloroform’ was discovered four or five years earlier. In a hospital in Kochi state, chloroform was used to remove tumour by operation from the thigh of a Tamilian.

In issue No.13 of Vrischikam 1849, the information of a discovery concerns finding a method to turn glass into liquid. The liquid glass can be painted as if it is a paint. Painting it on wood would make wood immune to water; it would not catch fire easily, either. It is generally used to paint the outer sides of ships.

Discovery of gold at California in North America and the subsequent commotion among people was a rare and extraordinary event in history. This happening is described in issue 6 of Medam 1849 under the title ‘Much gold is found’. News stories about the limitless availability of the yellow metal are also carried by many issues of *Jnananikshepam* subsequently. The issue 11 of Kanni 1849 informs that as much gold as in California was also found in Australia.

The news about a doctor from Bengal discovering a vaccination for epidemic like cholera as in the case of smallpox is published in the issue 19 of July 1857.

It is generally known that one of the basis for European Renaissance was the discovery of mariner’s compass. The importance of travel by ships in the 19th century and the security the mariner’s compass provided to ship travel are beyond speculation today. The issue of Makaram 1856, elaborates on

the discovery of the magnetic box of the ship travellers and its benefits.

Aluminium is the metal which is used for everything from air travel to kitchen utensils. The finding of this metal is described in the January issue of 1857 in the following manner: “Commerce increased in England. Every year different kind of materials are being discovered in order to make products. Some days earlier a metal called Aluminium was discovered from soil. It is as hard as steel but more costly. It does not rust, nor does it get damaged. With the finding of an easier method to take aluminium out of soil, it is probable that other metals will lose their value. It is also told that coins are going to be made from the new metal.”

The same issue also carries news regarding the separation of iron using a low cost technological method, which consists in passing cold air through the melted ore.

‘Gutta percha’ is a kind of latex obtained from certain rubber trees in Malaysia. Issue no.21 of Karkkidakam 1850, carries the story regarding it, which is as follows: “Gutta percha is the latex of a tree. It is produced in Singapore and adjacent places. This latex was discovered only four years ago. It is a gum which is like leather. It can be made into any shape by placing it in hot water. Slippers, cap, dress, strap, bottle, bags, pot, boxes, bangles are some of the products that can be fashioned with it.”

Railways and Telecommunications

Railways and telecommunications system are the most significant and valuable contributions which the 19th century has given to man. These were at the forefront of development responsible for bringing about basic transportations having far reaching consequences in realising globalisation. The industrial revolution began in the middle of the 18th century and was completed in the middle of 19th century. Railways and

telecommunications played a crucial role in the success of this revolution. As a matter of fact these were the two dimensions of the industrial revolution. *Jnananikshepam* has a clear picture of these technological marvels that transformed the face of world culture, spreading in the different parts of the country as well as in Kerala. Not only that, the news magazine also carried stories about their beginnings, history, ways of functioning and principles in its different issues.

The first reference to the Railways was found in the 10th issue of Chingam 1849. It appeared under the title ‘Steam Vehicles’. “It is not yet running in India; but its preparations are afoot in Calcutta, Madras and Bombay.”

The construction work for railways began in Madras on 9th June (Mithunam) 1853. *Jnananikshepam* carried the news in the following manner:

“Iron rails: Last month the work has started to construct iron rails for introducing the steam vehicles. In order to witness the breaking ground on the first day the honourable Governor, many Europeans and thousands of people were present. The work began with a prayer invoking the blessings of the Almighty God on the venture, on the workers and other people engaged in making it a reality. There were also shots from the rifles and beating of drums for the ceremony. The Governor, using a silver spade, broke a little soil of the ground and there the digging was carried out by the workers.” In 1853, this was historical news and a great event of significance. News at the same time a contemporary event. The news was a recognition that great technology that makes distance between towns shorter had arrived at the neighbourhood.

Telegraph came first followed by railways. This made the slogan ‘Telegraph showed the way to railways’ spread widely.

Issue no.76 (Kumbam 1855) carried both news in the following manner:

Iron Rails

“The company has decided to build iron rails to connect the main cities in the country. Their construction cost is estimated to be 3 crores of Rupees. From Madras to Coimbatore and through Palakkattussery to Malabar the rails are being built as fast as possible. Speculations are strong regarding the extension of rails from Palakkattussery to Kochi.”

Telegraph

“The telegraph links between Madras, Bombay and Calcutta have been completed. So news from Bombay to Calcutta as well as to Madras can be sent within minutes.”

In the issue of December 1858, the following news had appeared:

“Telegraph has arrived in Kochi. But its wires have not been pulled across the rivers, yet. It has been across Kodungalloor near the sea. There is a saying that ‘Telegraph shows the way to Railways’. So, Railway’s arrival in Kochi can be expected in the near future.” This news was not a shallow prediction. Because the issue of April 1859 has the news that “Rails for the steam vehicle is getting ready from Madras to Chavakkatt.”

There is a feature article in the issues 37 (Vrischikam 1851) and 38 (Dhanu 1851) with the headline ‘Iron Rails’. It describes the salient features of Railways and Trains. The issue 4 of April 1856 talks about ‘Steam Vehicle’, but also combines it with the news regarding ‘Iron Rails’. In this feature the history and operations of railways are described.

The year 1858 ends with the information that preparations

were afoot to introduce telegraph in Travancore as well. “Hearing that telegraph has been completed up to Kochi, the king has decided to extend it up to Thiruvananthapuram and he has ordered to collect wooden poles for the same.”

General Knowledge

The purpose and duty of education is to make individuals competent to live properly. Providing general knowledge to influence people to be righteous and moral is also educational work. The spread of general knowledge carried out by *Jnananikshepam* has to be perceived and evaluated from this point of view. There are many things that throw light on the daily lives as well as the circumstances of people in *Jnananikshepam*.

In the issue of July 1856, *Jnananikshepam* carries an article on “Knowledge necessary for boat people”. It narrates ways to escape from drowning for those who do not know swimming. As Kerala is replete with rivers, ponds and lagoons, this kind of knowledge is highly valuable to people.

When writing on paper became prevalent, paper and ink became necessary materials. The issue 11 of Kanni 1849 describes the necessary materials and the method to make ink. At a time when writing on paper was the fashion of the day, making ink at home was certainly very useful to the people.

People were greatly attracted to the Calendar (English-Malayalam) and the code of foot measurement (of one’s shadow to indicate time) published in issues 11 (Kanni 1849) and 15 (Makaram 1850), respectively. The calendar was indicated in a long square column divided into two parts. One for English number (date) and the other for Malayalam. At a time when the calendar was nearly absent, this calculation was very useful. Later when calendars began to be made, this method of calculation was imitated. But there is one difference. Whereas the calendar

in *Jnananikshepam* had indicated dates of Malayalam and English in separate columns, the present day calendars mark both in one column.

When calendar was not common to indicate days, *Jnananikshepam* published the ‘monthly calculation to fill that lacuna’. The clock also was not there to be a pointer to time. To overcome this limitation the news magazine published the ‘code of foot measurement’ to know the time. The ancient people in India had used shadow to measure time. According to this method, a particular length (in ft) of shadow stands for a specific time (Nazhika = 24 minutes) after sunrise. This is the essence of foot measurement code of time. This code for the specific month was published in the particular issue related to that month. For example, the foot measurement code for the month of Vrischika was published in the 15th issue (Makaram 1850).

Ft	68	34	22	15	12	10	8	7	6	5	4	4	4	4	3
Inch (Angulam)	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	3	3	4	7	3	1	0	7
Hour (Nazhika)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Features on healthcare information was also published in *Jnananikshepam*. There was widespread cholera in South India in 1860. Many people died. In the issue of August 1860 *Jnananikshepam* carried the following news regarding the plague in Madras: “Cholera had very severely affected the people of Madras. There were 60 to 70 deaths per day. Now it is known that things have improved quite a bit. In a letter to the editor, one person has expressed the view that the atmosphere in the plague affected areas could be purified by firing into the air by cannons continuously for 3 to 4 days and by making a fire with hay in surrounding areas. This would pacify the plague to a great extent.”

A vacancy was created by the return of Charles Trevalian to England. This vacancy of the Madras Governor was filled by Henry Ward. But hardly two months after assuming the job, he was affected by cholera and died on August 2nd 1860.

In the beginning of 1860 itself cholera had spread in several parts of Travancore. 52 people died in Mundakkayam alone. It is in these circumstances that a medical article on cholera was published in the February issue of *Jnananikshepam*, 1860. The article elucidated three ways in which cholera occurs, its signs, its treatment and so on.

The issue of March 1860 carries another article on ‘Easily available medicine for the disease’. Under subtitles, the article points out the signs of the diverse diseases and prescribes their treatment. The write up, in fact, mentions a wide variety of diseases. Some of them were cholera, accompanied by fever, severe stomach pain, constipation, dysentery, diarrhoea and vomiting in children, red eye, lack of digestion, cough, severe vomiting and so on.

Issue 60 of Thulam 1853 talks about ‘Medication for the Poisoned’. This note describes the way to remove the poison from inside by inducing vomiting.

Precautions to be taken at the time of lightning and thunder can be found in issue 8 of Mithunam, 1849. These precautions are relevant as long as lightning and thunder exists. Even today such precautions are published in newspaper columns.

The essay on vaccination in the issue of August 1856 was very informative. After defining vaccination, the article goes on to elaborately describe how Jenner discovered it and its benefits.

Now general knowledge is part of the syllabus at the school level as well as an unavoidable subject in competitive exams. The ‘Quiz’ method of testing the knowledge levels was developed in

connection with general knowledge. The method of discourse on knowledge whether for general knowledge or in the quiz type is the question and answer approach. This approach was quite common in *Jnananikshepam* when publishing matters on general knowledge. A perusal of 11 and 12 issues of 1849 (Kanni, Thulam) under the title 'A drop of knowledge' would provide ample evidence of this. Attention has to be paid to the terms like width, brightness used to indicate the qualities of crystal, water, mirror. More examples are given below.

1. What is heat? That which warms the bodies and things

2. How does this take place?

The heat transfers softly and invisibly from heated things which touch the veins; and thus warms the body.

3. What is the name of this transfer? It is called 'Kellorikka'. It causes the warmth to things.

4. But where does the heat generating Kellorikka come from? It comes from the sun and also from lightning. And when metals manufacturing medicines, and things rub against each other.

5. What are special activities of heat?

It enlarges air; melts metals and others; turns water into vapour; and burns diverse materials.

6. Do the rays of the sun heat and then burn different materials without any other help?

No. The sun generates fire when dry branches oscillate and rub against each other. Things also catch fire due to the brilliance of the sun and with the help of a gem that glitters.

7. How does a gem that looks like a single glass of spectacles generate fire?

It happens due to the structure of the gem. The middle of the gem is thick and the sides are thin. The rays of the sun fall on the thick part and spreads to all sides and combine to become a single ray, which has the heat of all the rays of the combination and therefore produces fire.

8. What is thunderbolt?

It is a power that enters into every material and in all places. It has two aspects. They are known as positive and negative. When it is visible lightning occurs.

9. What is lightning? What does it shine intermittently?

When air becomes overheated, the thunder stroke originating from the earth and increases in certain clouds. When it becomes too much the thunder stroke of one kind combines with another kind. When what is one cloud joins with what is in another cloud, people call it lightning and when it touches the earth, it is described as lightning stroke.

10. What is thunder? The noise heard when a bullet from a gun goes over the head or when the birds fly away. It is caused by the very fast movement of the air.

About the Sun

Q. What is the sun?

A. Sun shines with its own brightness and goes together with planets like the earth.

Q. How big is the sun?

A. It is as large as ten lakh earths, i.e., sun is ten lakh times bigger than the earth.

Q. Is the sun standing still?

A. The sun does not move from its position. Standing in the

same place it turns like a wheel. One complete turn takes 25 days.

- Q. How do we know sun oscillates while remaining in the same position?
- A. Blacken a mirror with smoke. Look at the sun through this mirror. One can see black spots in the image of the sun in the mirror. Observe the spots with great attention, one will find it changing its place. After 25 days the spots will return to its original place. This implies that during that period the sun completes one circle of oscillation.

(Issue 24, Thulam 1852)

Scientific Essays

Path breaking and very noble attempts to spread the light of modern scientific knowledge could be seen in the pages of *Jnananikshepam*. This news magazine gave almost equal importance or close to it to both news coverage and the dissemination of modern scientific knowledge. Question and answers, discussions, essays and feature stories were some of the prose styles adopted for providing scientific knowledge to its readers. The progress in science and technology had resulted in unlimited wealth of knowledge in the West. Because the light of scientific sun that arose in the West had created a great impact on the intellects of the East, so much so a reader was compelled to write that the 'light of the sun that rises not only in the East also in the West.'²² *Jnananikshepam* abounds in articles on natural science, physics, geography, atmospheric knowledge, astrology, astronomy, scientific equipments, technology and so on.

In the issue no.10 of Chingam, the magazine carries a small write up on the 'Decaylessness of matter', which explains the law of conservation of mass. This scientific truth is scientifically

demonstrated through the example of salt crystals, which have been dissolved in water. The issue 14 of Dhanu 1849 elucidates that air is matter and has characteristics of matter in an article under the title 'Air, the matter'. Air can be weighed, it can be heated and measured; it requires space. These are the qualities of air as matter, described in the news magazine.

The issue 20 of Mithunam 1850 carries a scientific article on the 'distinctive features of matter' or a thing. It is presented in the form of a conversation between two individuals, Raman and Varghese. It is a long article of over five pages describing 6 factors as the distinctive signs of matter. They are inability to enter, area, form, separateness, inertia and attraction. The ideas in this article were also used to negate the contention that world was an illusion and everything is a part of God. It criticises the theory of illusion (Mayavada) of the Vedantins in an understated manner, but does not lower itself as an antagonist of religion.

Another interesting scientific article is about the 'Qualities of magnet' (issue 22, Chingam 1850). This is also presented in the form of a conversation between Raman and Thomman. Thomman answers to the doubts raised by Raman regarding magnet. The discussion is about the nature of magnet, its uses and how some deceivers put it to use to cheat people and so on.

Amidst the discussion on general knowledge and the spread of scientific information, an important matter deserves our serious consideration. This had been pointed out by Dr. Scaria Sacaria. He writes the following in the section on 'Discussion and Completion' of the article titles 'Malayalam Literature and Christians.' "Values of Knowledge" is a scholarly book published from Kottayam ten years (1858) before the Textbook Committee was formed in Travancore... A quick perusal of the book would confirm the view it was a highly knowledgeable text for the students. The content of the book describes such

subjects as volcanoes, thunderbolts, seation, wind, telescope, mule, caves, whirlwind, water currents, thermometer, islands, mountains, earthquakes, clouds, rain, ocean and so on. He also quotes the last section of the book an essay on “Diving Bell”, in order to explain the presentation style of the scholarly text (page 421, 422).

The last article ‘Diving Bell’ of the book ‘Sources of Knowledge’ was published by *Jnananikshepam* along with a design (in the issue 8 of August 1856). On the same subject another article was published with the title ‘Diving Bell’ in issue no.35 (Kanni 1851). Nearly all things which were included in the sources of knowledge such as thermometer, telescope, rain and clouds, islands in the ocean, thunderbolt and others had been published several times in *Jnananikshepam* earlier. Some of the observations regarding scientific and technological knowledge as well as Malayalam prose made by Dr. Scaria Saccaria are relevant here. “We see the beautiful sight of Western scientific and technological knowledge being disseminated in ‘Sources of Knowledge’. Today when there are many who contend that Malayalam language is not capable of discussing science, the choice of Malayalam as the medium for spreading science almost one and a half century ago, by the missionaries is indeed laudable. Scaria plays a significant role in the modernization of a people. Similarly knowledgeable prose has a role in the modernization of a language.

Jnananikshepam played a great part in making Malayalam as a medium for scientific and technological knowledge and thus raising it to a higher level and helping it to grow. By sharing knowledge and forming a language suitable to share the knowledge *Jnananikshepam* modernized a people and their language. It provided the light for its thoughts and words for its speech.

Many scientific terms which later were spread in Kerala and used widely by the general populace were formed through the articles in *Jnananikshepam*. For example, the term ‘ore’ (mineral substance) used in the article on ‘The Qualities of Magnet’. It was not only merely used, but its meaning was clarified by defining it. “The real meaning of the word ‘ore’ is the wealth of the earth. But this term is ascribed to all metals and other hard substances like the nine gems.”³

Rain is a phenomenon that had given rise to considerable interest in the minds of the people at all times and all places. How does it rain? A small article titles ‘Rain’ explains the scientific aspects of the rain, in issue 10, 1849. The article ‘Clouds and Rain’ in the issue 48 of Thulam 1852 provides elaborate explanations (3 pages) of the scientific aspects of rain.

The characteristics of the articles in *Jnananikshepam* were their conciseness and clarity. The logical scientific essays were also the same. Moreover, they were appropriate for creating scientific awareness and encourage readers to raise questions and find answers. ‘The Earth and the Sun’ in the 14th issue of Dhanu 1849 is an astrology related article. After narrating the distance between the earth and the sun, the problem whether earth oscillates around the sun or the sun around the earth is discussed in a logical manner. The earth perambulates the sun and rotates itself. This causes day and night. The essay introduces two more questions that raise the curiosity as well as urge for research before completing it.

“Why is nothing falls from the earth when it revolves?”

“Why does magnet attract iron?”

The issue 22 (Chingam 1850) carries an article on ‘Sky wonders’ which contains information about the sun and the stars. This article describes the great size of the sun, the number

and size of stars, observing the celestial bodies through the telescope to study them and so on. Another long astronomy related article was 'The Milky Way' (issue 27, Makaram 1851).

Geography was a very popular subject of study during the industrial revolution and colonization. *Jnananikshepam* published several articles on the history of the nation, which included geographical topics. The article 'The Islands in the Ocean' of issue 12 and 'The great parts of the earth' in issue 13 are examples of geographical articles. In 'the great parts of the earth', the subjects dealt with are subcontinents, Europe, Asia, Africa and America.

Issue 34 (Chingam 1851) contained an interesting scientific article on Ebb and Flow (low tide and high tide). This article having 3 pages, explains the attraction of the sun and the moon causing low tide and high tide.

As a part of its effort to acquaint people with modern science, *Jnananikshepam* published many articles describing scientific equipments, their operations and their benefits.

Microscope (issue 72, Thulam 1852), Barometer (issue 5, May 1856), Thermometer (June 1856), Telescope (issue 2, Kumbham 1856) etc. belong to this category of articles. Similarly, *Jnananikshepam* had many articles on technical know-how, explaining its relevance and spread. Issue 20 of Chingam 1849 has a write up on 'Steam' which describes steam machines widely used in England at that time. Other examples are 'Light House' of Dhanu issue, 1855, 'Diving Bell' of August issue 1856. The term 'Light House' in Malayalam 'Velichamalika' was coined by *Jnananikshepam* which later achieved common usage in Malayalam.

Most of the long scientific stories in *Jnananikshepam* concern natural science. The feature on 'Whale' in the issue 41 of

Meenam 1852 was actually very long running into 3 pages. The issue of Makaram 1853 talks about land birds that do not fly, such as ostrich, Emu, Cassowrie and Sandu as well as about water birds. The account on 'Camel' runs into three pages in the issue 53, Meenam 1853. Issues 61, 62 (Vrischikam 1853) feature 'Bees' which essays on their zoology and social life.

A perusal of issues from Vrischikam 1848, and the news from 1855, would demonstrate how much space *Jnananikshepam* had devoted to the spread of general knowledge as well as the priority given to it. The contents of *Jnananikshepam* were all about news; but they could have been, without doubt, described as features or essays.

Two great benefits resulted for Malayalam through the scientific essays in *Jnananikshepam*. One, the light of the scientific sun that rose in the West, also spread its light here. It removed the ancient and traditional attitudes from the mind of the Malayalee and established modern scientific concepts instead. Second, by becoming a medium for scientific knowledge, the basis of Malayalam prose was made strong. The prose that became capable of expressing any idea progressed from an underdeveloped situation to a well developed state.

Notes

- 1 Based on Vijnana Manjari, Sanmarga Samgraham, Mahacharita Samgraham and others, Dr. Sukumar Azhikode says: "Kerala Varma Valiya Koi Thampuran was attracted to English for the sake of education and not for political expediency, nor religion or politics. He approached prose as an instrument that provides general knowledge to the young generation." *Malayala Sahitya Padanangal* (Studies in Malayalam Literature), p.317.
- 2 *Jnananikshepam* issue 70, 1854 Chingam, p.355.
- 3 *Ibid.* issue 22, 1850 Chingam, p.171.

VI

STORIES AND NOVELS

There is a widely held belief that 'Randam Padavum, Munnam Padavum Vijnana Manjariyum' (The Text of 2nd Standard, 3rd Standard and Anthology of Knowledge) scripted by Kerala Varma Valiya Koyithampuran during the 1867-70 period became the fundamentum of literature movements and subjects of learning in Kerala. This belief encouraged to link Thampuran to the development of modern Malayalam prose. This has led to the conclusion that "those who search for the roots of our children's as well as story telling literature would eventually reach here¹." But that *Jnananikshepam* was the most significant among the source materials which Kerala Varma Valiya Koyithampuran developed on to script his text books is an interesting fact that had gone unobserved.

In the 9th issue of Karkkadakam 1849, there is a story about 'The Elephant and the Taylor'. Dr. N. Sam qualifies this story "as the first short story that was published through *Jnananikshepam* in Malayalam". The same story appears in the textbook of Kerala Varma Valiya Koyithampuran² in the following manner:

"A tailor sitting in his room which had a window was stitching dresses with costly clothes. At that time an elephant was brought by the mahout by that way. The elephant was on its way to drink water. When it reached the window, it thrust its trunk through the window. The elephant was playing a harmless prank. But the tailor harmed the trunk of the elephant with the point of a needle. And the tailor received the result for his harmful

action. The elephant, after he had his fill of water, came back with the trunk full of water and poured it through the window, drenching the tailor, the dress, the clothes and everything inside the room. The clothes were damaged. Besides the tailor became the laughing stock of all his neighbours."

This is indeed a highly focused and logical story. *Jnananikshepam* also added a moral to it: "Mischievous games bring ridicule." But Valiya Koyithampuran avoided it.

The story of the Elephant and the Tailor was a speculative tale. But the story of Anapyas and Amphinomoos (*Jnananikshepam* issue 21, Karkkadakam 1850) was the narration of a true event. Its narration style deserves special attention. Recognising narration as the most important component of modern short stories and novels, the story writer has used it as the chief method of an artistic creation. Through such wise and morally significant actual stories, *Jnananikshepam* brought story telling closer to the life of people. Till then stories were based on blind beliefs. The place of these tales was taken over by the new stories whose hallmark was naturalness and logical construction. Thus literature was linked to the realities of life and thus gave it a reality touch and credibility. All the subsequent stories in *Jnananikshepam* follow this trend to highlight the human aspect. Its value is increased by the fact that in them there is only strictly human stories without any reference to religion. The story of Anaphass and Amphinomoos is as follows:

Anapyas and Amphinomoos

A volcano is described as a mountain which has an opening at the top and through it the fire, smoke, heated rocks and liquids that are within it come out. The volcano in Sicily is the most significant one in Europe. Long ago the above materials erupted with very great sound from the volcano. Boiling lava

rose high from within and spread all over the top and flowed down on the sides towards the cities below. Almost all these cities were burned and the atmosphere became filled with ashes and the air had become dark and heavy. The people who were residing near the mountain, collected their valuable belongings on their heads and ran away to save themselves. Among the people who ran away with their belongings were two men named Anapyas and Amphinomoos. But the belongings they carried away were totally different from the others. They carried away their aged parents. While the parents were carried away something miraculous happened to the place. While all the other areas, including things in them were burned to ashes by the lava, the place of the two men was not touched by lava and thus remained green as before. Therefore the people called it 'the Field of Devoted People'.

The same story is narrated in the textbook of Kerala Varma Valia Koi Thampuran in the following manner.

Anapyas and Amphinomoos

A mountain which releases melted substances, stones and spearing fire with smoke from within with great force through its aperture on the top is called a volcano. The most significant volcano in Europe is in Sicily and is called Etna. Several decades ago, the mountain burst with great sound. A burning liquid substance flowed from the top through its sides towards the foot of the mountain where it destroyed many villages and the people in them. The people residing close to the volcano picked up all their valuable things and ran away to save themselves. Amidst the people who ran away with their wealth were two youth named Anapyas and Amphinomoos who carried away a burden different from others. It was a special burden. The burden consisted of their aged parents, who could not otherwise escape from the burning liquid.

This action of the young men surprised many people. Moreover the path the youth took was not at all affected by fire, while all areas around them were burned to ashes. This path remained green even later as well. Although ignorant, the good people of the area believed that the miracle happened due to the good work of the young men and named the place "The Land of Devoted Men".

Another example of the obligation which Kerala Varma Valia Koi Thampuran's text books had to *Jnananikshepam* was the story, 'A Thief and His Mother' published in the 79th issue, Edavam, 1855.

A Thief and his Mother

A boy studying in a school stole the note book of another boy and took it to his mother at home. But the mother, instead of reprimanding her son, encouraged him. Gradually when the boy grew up, he started stealing valuable and costly things. Finally he was caught red handed. When he was handcuffed and was being taken away, his mother came through the crowd beating her breast and crying. The son saw his mother and beckoned her to come near with the permission of the officers. When she came near, he, pretending to speak in her ear, bit off a portion of her ear. She cried aloud, and the crowd began to abuse the son for harming his mother. Then he said that she was the cause of his downfall. Years ago when I stole schoolmate's book she should have beaten me. If she had done that, I would not have grown up to become a thief. "Evil must be nipped in bud; spare the rod and spoil the child."

The same story with the title "The Stealing Habit of a Boy" can be read in the text book of Valiakoi Thampuran. For the sake of comparison it is given below:

The Stealing habit of a Boy

A boy studying in school used to steal books and other materials from a classmate and took them to his mother. Instead of reprimanding her son for committing even wicked deeds, the mother used to encourage him. As he grew older, his wicked deeds also increased. Finally, during a theft he killed someone. For this crime he was condemned to death by hanging. While he was being taken to the gallows, his mother followed him crying. When they reached the place of gallows³, the man requested permission to speak to his mother. When it was granted he went near his mother. Pretending to speak in her ear, he bit off her ear in a cruel manner. Seeing this cruel deed, the onlookers became angry with him. Then he told them “O’ good people, this misfortune has happened to me⁴ today due to this woman. Had she brought me up disciplining me, I would not have fallen into a big crime like this and face the gallows.”

If parents do not bring up their children in the proper way, they would be responsible for the bad consequences.”

While retelling this story of the Boy-Thief, he made some changes in its narration. The crime committed by the boy was not just stealing, but murder, consequences of which was gallows for the offender. He also altered the moral of the story at the end. But the moral reflecting a verse in the Book of Proverbs (in the Bible) is what is more suitable to the occasion in *Jnananikshepam*. Although the change in the main story is appropriate, the crime of theft⁵ was indicated as the reason for the punishment of death.

The thief and his mother is actually the translation of the very famous Esope story. *Jnananikshepam* was well acquainted with Esope and the Esope stories.

The issue of 18th Medam, 1850 carries an article about the

Land of Ludia and its King Chrissus. Esope was depicted as a member of the Court of the King who also praised his intelligence.

‘Idler’ was a story that was published in the June issue of 1858. This was a story that integrated the creative beauty of short story, the originality of Speech, the narrative conversational style and the sense of humor. This tale is available in the textbook of Kerala Varma Valia Koi Thampuran under the title ‘The Story of a Lazy Boy’. Besides Valia Koi Thampuran several others had also made use of this story. Both versions of the story are given below:

‘The Idler’

When the sun had risen and the birds were chirping in the trees, a small boy was sent to school by his father. He was a cunning boy, not at all interested in studies. He was more keen on playing than studying. Had he intelligence, he would not have done it. Observing a Honey Bee flying around the flowers, the boy asked “Oh pretty bee, would you come and play with me?” “No, I do not want to be lazy. I have to collect honey.” Seeing a dog, the idler asked, “Hey doggie would you come and play with me?”

The dog said: “No I don’t want to idle; I have to stand guard at the house. Thieves might enter the house. Actually I’m already late.” Then the boy saw a bird sitting on the roof and pecking at the hay there.

He asked the bird “Hello, bird. Would you come to play with me?” The bird answered “No. I can’t be lazy. Because I have to collect some hay, cotton and goat hair to build my nest” saying this, the bird flew away.

Then the boy thought “How come there are no lazy people

around. So the little boy should not become lazy.” Thus he immediately rushed to the school and studied his lessons well. And the teacher praised him for his industrious conduct.

The Story of a Lazy Boy

A city boy was sent to school by his father. He was more interested in playing than studying. He was unhappy to go to school. Once he saw a black beetle flying around several flowers. When he asked, “Beautiful black beetle, would you come with me to play?” it answered, “No. I can’t. I have to mix the honey in the flowers.”

Thereafter he noticed a dog. The boy asked the dog, “Would you come to play with me?” The dog replied: “No, kid I have to go and guard my Lord’s house” and went away.

Then seeing a bird building its nest, the boy asked: “Hey, bird, do come and play with me.” The bird’s reply was “I couldn’t do that. Because I have work to do.”

This made the boy think, “What’s happening? No one is idle. Why should I be an idler, then? No. That won’t do.” Thinking in this manner, the boy started going to school and study quite studiously. And eventually he became smart youngster⁶.

The story ‘Idler’ is the basis of Children’s poetry by Panthalam Kerala Varma titled “Kalikutty”

“Beautiful, beautiful dear bird!
Would you come to play with me?”
“Can’t, can’t, with sprigs
I go to build my nest.”
“Beetle, black beetle,
could you come to play with me?”
“Certainly can’t. I go
to suck the honey of flowers.”

“Oh little lamb, little lamb,
Would you come to play with me?”
“Definitely not, I go
to graze in the field”
“Doggie, doggie,
Would you come to play with me?”
“No, No, No, I go to guard
my master’s house.”
“As without playing,
Went everyone to work,
Ashamed was the little kid,
Who went to school as well.”

Jnananikshepam was a treasure chest experience based narrations, observations, stories, parables (eg. The Parable of the Prodigal Son - issue 8; Story of Lazar and the Rich man - issue 56) When helped to take the initial steps in the art of narration and supported these steps to become confirmed. These stories also paved the way for *Jnananikshepam* become a popular periodical, just as its news coverage made it an interesting news magazine.

ESSAYS

What is an essay? M. H. Embras defines it as “A short literary work⁷ in prose which expresses a special viewpoint or discusses a topic in order to persuade to accept the writer’s views on any subject. Although diversity in length, content and structure are present it would generally be a narration that is simple and concise⁸.” *Jnananikshepam* abounds in essays which express these qualities, and narrates a diversity of topics.

The first issue itself deserves attention for its essays on Man, Language, Shape of the earth, Planets and the Prigin of the week. These essays consist of Fifty to one hundred and seventy five words. Their conciseness, clarity of idea, simplicity and

diversity of topics are noteworthy.

A general analysis of the essays in *Jnananikshepam* would reveal that some of them concern religious propaganda. Even though the subjects of essays concern secular topics, some of them end up in religious thoughts or instructions. However there were plenty of essays focused on knowledge dissemination alone without any reference at all to religion in *Jnananikshepam*. Examples of such essays are 'Man' in the first issue, 'Ocean', 'Serpent' in the fourth issue, the articles with pictures in most of the issues from Kanni 1855 onwards. The essay on articles on Light House Ships, Wheat Powdering Machine, Diving Bell, A Way of Catching fish, Bird That is known as elephant snatcher, Tiger, Protestant Church in Kochi and others demonstrated the spread of effort *Jnananikshepam* had taken to disseminate knowledge.

The articles with graphic pictures in *Jnananikshepam* deserve special attention. The very beautiful pencil sketches were turned into Blocks without losing the artistic beauty in the process. Using these blocks full page pictures were painted in *Jnananikshepam*. These pictures drawn in black and white with shades and lines have the beauty of a painting. John Chandy has stated that the pencil sketches are the work of Mrs. Henry Baker Junior. When John Hawksworth resigned from the editorship of *Jnananikshepam* and left for England in 1856, the responsibility of the editor was taken over Henry Baker Junior. Henry Baker Jr. was a natural scientist⁹. Mrs. Henry Baker was providing a visible form¹⁰ to the articles¹¹ prepared by her husband. Mrs. Baker was the daughter of Rev. A. Kitchin, whose maiden name was Frances A. Kitchin. She had created a logo by combining English letters like F.A.B., F.B.; A.B. etc. Letters F.A. might have indicated Frances A and B for Baker. In any case, Mrs. Henry Baker Junior was an artist. In the History of Travancore Kochi Anglican Church¹² a painting of Mrs. Baker Junior with the

caption 'Mundakkayam 1850' had been published with a note "From the lithography of Mrs. Henry Baker Junior." There is also a record¹³ of printing textbooks, sketches, maps etc. using stencil (cyclostyling) required for the Preparatory School which Baker Junior started at Mundakkayam. These sketches and maps might have been the artistic creation of Mrs. Baker Junior.

The first picture appeared in *Jnananikshepam* in its issue of Kanni 1855. The picture depicts "The Queen of England sitting on the throne and on the left side two princesses sitting on chairs; and two princes standing on the left and the right." The next two issues do not carry any pictures. Thereafter from the Dhanu 1855 to the April 1860 issues news with pictures had been continuously published. Henry Baker Junior went to England on furlow on June 22nd 1866. Till a month earlier to this date *Jnananikshepam* carried news with pictures which were attractive and knowledgeable. This implies that the column of news with pictures was the contribution of Henry Junior couple¹⁴.

The pictures of *Jnananikshepam* had not only attracted the attention of the Travancore King Uthram Thirunal Marthanda Varma but he also honored them by rewarding those who drew the pictures. It was not surprising as Uthram Thirunal who was younger brother of the world famous Swathi Thirunal, was a promoter of arts and an artist himself. The new story in the issue of January 1958 about 'His highness the Travancore king' was accompanied by a picture of the King. The news was as follows: "When the Travancore King came to know that *Jnananikshepam* had carried news and instructions beneficial to his subjects, he was immensely happy and he had sent a royal letter along with his specially painted picture carved in Ivory, to the artists who drew the pictures in the magazine."¹⁵

According today's presentation style, the literary work

published in each issue of *Jnananikshepam* could be qualified as essays; but the editor of *Jnananikshepam* regarded them as news and published them as such. In the issue of November 1859, a work is published along with picture, which had the following introductory statement. “The news and the accompanying picture here was taken from the book of a European who narrated that the Chief Cook reprimanded with his rod and enforced his way of doing things. It could be said that the news stories of *Jnananikshepam* had the position of a ‘feature’ of today.

Each issue of *Jnananikshepam* consisted of 8 pages. Picture was published as a supplement consisting of two pages or a sheet of paper. Nothing was printed on the first page. The second page carried the picture. The supplement page was not numbered. The news along with the picture was printed as the first item in the magazine.

Although the essays in the first issue of *Jnananikshepam* were short, the subsequent issues from the second one onwards tended to be long. Some examples of the long narrations were ‘Lanka’ in the second issue and ‘The Harmony of Living Beings’ in the ninth issue. The historical essay on ‘Lanka’ had all the beauty of the narrative style; especially latter part of it was really a very beautiful narration. Another historical chronicle is the one about the country called ‘Ludia’ and its King Chrisuss in the 18th issue (Medam 1850). This was the longest essay till then, running upto nearly four and a half pages.

The diversity of topics in the articles of *Jnananikshepam* was a precedent for the Malayalam Journalism, which came later. Majority of them were scientific articles and historical chronicles. Along with history, there were narrations of Geographical matters. The magazine also contains many reports on flora and fauna and their diversity. Religious subjects and social matters were not beyond the ambit of its coverage. The

articles published in *Jnananikshepam* encompassed such subjects as ‘Egypt’ (issue 14), Assyna (issue 16) Media (issue 17) Ludia and its King Chrissus (issue 18) Persia (issue 19) and Greece (issue 24). Taking a cue from these accounts on countries, Bhasha Poshini during the first decades of the 20th century published articles on Siberia (by Krishnadas), New Continent (by S. Sambasiva Iyer), Tunnels through Alps (C.S. Subramanyan Potti), Traditions of Japan (C. Anthappai), Inhabitants of Polar (ABCD), Entertainments of Ancient Romans (P.M.), and Japan (P.A. Raman). *Jnananikshepam* witnessed not only the origin of essays in Malayalam, also the expansion of that branch of prose. The narrative accounts in *Jnananikshepam* were highly significant for their sequential order ideas, clarity of thought, division of paragraphs, punctuation, diversity of composition, simplicity of language conducive to discussion and so on.

TRAVELOGUE

According to the present general understanding, the first travelogue was of Geevarghese Mar Gregorios (holy man of Parumala) on his journey to Jerusalem. It was published in 1895. At the same time the first travelogue written in Malayalam was ‘The Book of News’ (Varthamana Pustakam). Written by Paremakal Thoma Kathanar in 1785, it was published only in 1936.

Evaluating the above compositions, Paul Manalil has expressed the view (in Jerusalem travelogue of the holy man of Parumala) that there was no inappropriateness in describing the Jerusalem travelogue as the first characteristic one of its kind printed in Malayalam.

However temporarily rejecting the traditional style of creating the ‘Father’ and the ‘first born’ through the wasted effort of the show of numerical and literary strength of organizations,

let us look at a travelogue published serially in *Jnananikshepam* in 1848. It was titled: 'The news scripted by two Parsees who went to England from Bombay.' The narration begins in the second issue (Dhanu 1848) and continues till the seventh issue (Edavam 1849).

'The news written by Two Parsees' was a literary work with an emotional touch. Its narrative style of describing co-travellers, countries they see, the people from country to country and other things with a reference to their own situation makes the narration quite appealing. The composition had given emphasis to the feeling a sight generates than how it appears.

The Journey of the Parsees who boarded the ship in Bombay was going to the shores of Africa by way of Kannur and Kochi. Describing the sight of Kerala by Parsees is an outstanding and factually relevant narration.

The language style of this literary composition which narrates sights seen as well viewpoints on them through lively little little verses is very far away from style adopted in the Jerusalem Travelogue and the Book of news. It would appear that the work composed by the Parsees had been translated. But the distaste usually felt in translations is totally absent.

But giving the impression of a never ending journey and yet without seeing the end, the travelogue was suspended. Although the words 'continues later' were printed, Malayalam was not lucky enough to enjoy the continuation.

DIALOGUE

Discussion or conversation is a method of prose, which *Jnananikshepam* had used widely, for the dissemination of ideas. Discussions were highly advantageous for maintaining interactions with the readers as befits a newspaper. Moreover, as already observed elsewhere Discussions have influenced and

encouraged readers to engage in the writing of prose.

Discussion first saw the light of the day in *Jnananikshepam* in the form of conversation written by one person in prose work. A good example of this conversation is the composition that appeared in issue 18 of Medam 1850 which had the title 'A Horoscope for *Jnananikshepam* – A conversation between a Vedantin and Hindu scholar at the same time. It was also a discussion. In it arguments are raised with conviction as well as with suitable examples to make them firm; and also refutes the opposite views in the same manner. The Vedantin who is of the view that horoscopes are unscientific asks the Hindu scholar about Horoscope. The Hindu scholar replies that all the news about a person could be known through horoscope. The Vedantin refutes this by saying that in that case, the astrologer might have been a super human being. The Hindu scholar answers that astrologer is not a superman, but belongs to a lower caste. Majority of people are like that; they are very ordinary people, saying stupid things. The story of the astrologer who was tested by a European is an example of this. Astrologer comes to the European's residence on the next day about which he had foretold the previous day, right on time. The European thrashes his cheek twice and says it was for this I had asked you to come. If you know the future, you could have avoided coming. Hindu scholar concludes his arguments saying that future is foretold on the basis of the quality of science and not founded on the foolishness of little men. Discussion continues further in which the Vedantin refutes all the counter arguments of the Hindu scholar.

The above discussion was between two imaginary characters. But later *Jnananikshepam* itself raised questions and the readers replied to them and these were published in the news magazine. The counter arguments refuting the arguments of the readers had also been published in the same issue.

In the issue 48 of Thulam 1852 a list of seven questions under the title 'Questions for the scholars' were published. The questions were concerned with blind beliefs as well as improper customs and rituals. The fifth question was put like this: "Would you believe that the creator who was holy and noble, engage himself in prostitution, stealing and liquor drinking?"

A reader wrote an answer to this question and sent to *Jnananikshepam* by post. It was published in the next issue of the magazine with the headline 'An item that came by post to be published in *Jnananikshepam*.' Along with this answer *Jnananikshepam* also published its own comments refuting the arguments of the reader. And these comments were printed as 'The opposing views to the above.'

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The first literary composition among the autobiographies of prose literature in Malayalam was known under the title 'The Prince'. It began to be published in *Jnananikshepam* from the issue of January 1859. It was the autobiography of the King of Kochi who had become a Christian. On the occasion of he being anointed as a priest, he had written his own biography. Someone had made a summary of the first part and had sent it to the magazine. It was this summary which was published as the first part of the autobiography in *Jnananikshepam*. It was published after his premature death.

While summarizing, no changes appear to have been made in the style of writing. *Jnananikshepam* had provided an introduction to the first part which was as follows: "People were generally in the know of the fact that a prince among sons of Kochi Kings had become a Christian 20 years ago believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. His sudden premature death was a great sorrow to the Church he had served so well. He had written his autobiography

at the time of his consecration as a priest. We give here a part of it as a summary."

The second part of the autobiography, 'The Prince', was published in the issue of March, 1859. The introductory remarks to this second part was as follows:

"A part of the biography of the Prince, a Son of the Kochi King was already published as a synopsis. Now the second part, which is being published is in his own composition." The Malayalam word used to describe summary can also be understood as translation. Here the meaning is synopsis and not translation.

Just as the publication of the travelogue by two Parsees was not completed, this autobiography also did not see the end. The Thirumulpad had written about his life experiences till his priesthood. And *Jnananikshepam* would have received only till the second part. Because it is not logical to think that further part was received, but not published.

POEMS

Jnananikshepam had chosen the path of prose, recognizing its necessity for language and the period. For this reason, *Jnananikshepam* kept a distance from compositions in poetry, even though there was an abundance of them. *Jnananikshepam*, which began publication in 1848 and continued to be published without missing a single issue, had not included even a solitary poem till Makaram 1856. In the month of Kumbham 1856, it carried a poem under the title 'Psalm'.

"Jesus Christ, son of God
Was born on earth,
Untouched he was by sin,
Was divine as well..."

The Christian psalm which begins like this was devoid of any literary merit. Here it may be remembered that by Dhanu 1855 John Hawksworth ceased to be the editor and from Makaram 1856, the new editor started publishing the magazine with a new issue number.

The second poem published by *Jnananikshepam* was in the issue no. 5 of May 1856. It was a short poem with the title 'Speak not falsehood'. It contained just 10 lines.

"From the sale of Land
Half the money received was brought.
And proclaimed
Only this much was received."

And the story of men and women sentenced to death.

The poem also contained the moral: 'Those who speak falsehood would go to hell.' The theme of the poem was the reputed story of Ananias and Sapphira in the Acts of Apostles (chapter 5, 1-11) in the bible. A man named Ananias, with the consent of his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property; with his wife's knowledge, he kept back some of the proceeds and brought only a part and laid it at the apostles' feet. 'Ananias', Peter asked 'Why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back part of the proceeds of the land? While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, were not the proceeds at your disposal? How is that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You did not lie to us, but to God.' Now when Ananias heard these words he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard of it. The young men came and wrapped up his body, then carried him out and buried him.

After an interval of about three hours his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. Peter said to her, 'tell me whether

you and your husband sold the land for such and such a price'. And she said 'Yes, that was the price'. Then Peter said to her 'How is that you have agreed together to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test? Look the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, they will carry you out'. Immediately she fell down at his feet and died. When the young men came in, they found her dead, so they carried her out and buried her beside her husband. And great fear seized the whole church and all who heard of these things.

Later two hymns appeared in the issue 40 of October 1856. They were "Jerusalem in Heaven" and "Christ the King". In the issue 12 there is "Hymn of Creation". Although it betrayed the influence of Sanskrit, the poem was a beautiful one. One verse is given here.

"Darkness covered the face of the deep
and swept over the face of the waters
Let there be light, His words uttered
And there was light,
separating night from day."

In most of the subsequent issues, one or two hymns appeared. Several of them were translations from English without having the grace and feel of Malayalam. Therefore the position of such hymns is outside the ambit of literature in Christian Music.

A Novel, the perfect example of prose

The serial publication of novels has always been special to Malayalees and a part of their predominant style. *Jnananikshepam* initiated this phenomenon way back in 1860. The Malayalam novel which was later published under the name 'Pullelikunju' was serialized by *Jnananikshepam* from its August issue 1860. The author of the novel was Archdeacon Koshy.

Pullelikunju was a literary work which was always involved in the discussions and deliberations regarding Malayalam novels of the early period. Some opined that it was a novel; others opposed this view. Differences of opinion that arose in the matter of *Pullelikunju* had also happened in the case of several other compositions such as 'Ghatakavadam' (cruel murder) and 'Kundalatha'. *Indulekha* was the first novel with characteristic traits that found wide acceptance. But what about novels before *Indulekha*? Didn't they have characteristic quality of a novel? Actually all are novels. *Indulekha* reveals the phase of maturity of the genre of Malayalam novel. But before youth there are stages of infancy, childhood and adolescence. The contention that before *Indulekha* there were no novels is like saying all those were born in our country were great men. A matter of false pride actually. To this a humorous retort was all those who were born in the country were infants. Same answer is valid in the matter of novels as well. Seeking to find inventors in literature as is done in scientific inventions need not be fruitful always. It is like the effort to assess the mind with measuring rod used for measuring a wide field. There are several dangers lurking in the attempt to determine the beginning of Malayalam novel with the assertion like 'the first novel with characteristic traits' and thus circumscribe history. There can be also another novel with the appropriate traits along with the novel with 'characteristic traits'. And if there is, it would be weak imitations.

In the introduction to the very long study regarding *Pullelikunju* C.I. Raman Nair says the following: "*Pullelikunju* was a literary composition published in June 1882. Its author was venerable Archdeacon Koshy. He had other literary works related to the Bible to his credit. A speech delivered by him in 1881 with the title 'A lesson on Truth' had also come out in book form. Among all of them *Pullelikunju* deserves the greatest importance. This work of 110 pages combines in it several traits

of a novel. 'Kundhalatha' by Appu Nedumgadi was published in 1887. Some consider it as the first novel. But Deacon Koshy's *Pullelikunju* was older than *Kundhalatha*, constructed like a novel and nobler than *Kundhalatha* on certain parameters." The above alluded study by C.I. Raman Nair concludes by underlining and confirming this view.

"The author had a purpose in composing the work. It was to project the superiority of Christian religion by ridiculing the improper customs prevalent in Hinduism. But the style of writing is so humorous that one reads the novel forgetting this negative aspect. That the composition has all the traits necessary for a novel. The author is quite an expert in creating a plot, characterization and criticism of characters. The dialogues are original and appealing. The characters in *Pullelikunju* belong to different communities such as Nair, Tamil Brahmin, Christian, Namboodiri, Brahmin, Pulayan, Parayah and so on. There is an originality in dialogues of characters according to their caste differences. And these are all aspects that combine to make a good novel."¹⁶

The title given to the continuation of the novel in *Jnananikshepam* was "Caste Differences: A conversation." Regardless of this title, it was not a conversation ordinarily found publication in *Jnananikshepam*. Generally discussions were mere conversations. But in 'Caste Difference', even though there is conversation, it is used as a supplementary component to the narration. In fact, the composition begins publication in the August issue in a narrative style. The following was the beginning: "When I was conversing general matters with Kaithakappallil Ramapanikker in his outhouse, a good looking low caste (Shudra) servant came there. As soon as he saw him, Panikker ended the conversation; and his face changed colour." The author had said in the introduction that necessary changes were carried out before publishing *Pullelikunju* as a book later.

These changes began in the title as well as in the text. While altering the title, the name of the main character of the novel was adopted as the title. After *Pullelikunju*, other novels from *Kundalatha* to *Indulekha* (also after *Indulekha*) this approach of choosing the name of the main character for the titles was the order of the day. Archdeacon Koshy also had a precedent for this approach. That was the work 'A story of two women, Phulmoni and Koruna'. (This story scripted in Bengali by Katherine Hanna Mullens was translated by Rev. Joseph Pete and published by CMS Press Kottayam in 1858. Its second edition was published by D.C. Books, Kottayam with an introduction by Dr. Scaria Zachariah.)

Jnananikshepam is a continuous link which clearly shows the evolution in the development of modern Malayalam prose. Malayalam prose achieved vigour and beauty equal to any prose of other languages in India. In *Jnananikshepam*, we come across a prose that had the capability to express any sentiment, form and great idea. The language of Prose became highly competent to be a medium to present conversation, description and narration. With this, Malayalam prose also developed the aptitude to create new dimension of language within the language itself as well as to develop a literature industry. This resulted in the birth of diverse branches of prose literature and Malayalam prose became enriched. The infancy of most of branches of literature which became predominant later can be seen in *Jnananikshepam*. "From this perspective *Jnananikshepam* was a magazine that had given birth to the essay, short stories, history, geography, Novel, Spiritual treatises, other articles imparting knowledge and several other new movements in the branches of prose. But the aim of the people behind the news magazine was not enrichment of literature. It was religious propaganda and dissemination of knowledge. In order to reach their aim they depended on several forms of literature. That is all. But it

resulted in the birth of fresh branches of our literature as well as the general development of the prose literature."¹⁷

Notes

- 1 Dr. Thikkurissi Gangadharan, Kerala Varma Kathakal (Stories).
- 2 Keralathile Samuhika Navothanavum Sahityavum (Social Renaissance and Literature in Kerala), p.169.
- 3 In the books of Kerala Varma Valia Koi Thampuran, there are several temporary use of words, which have been changed in the later books according to the needs of times.
- 4 In the books of Kerala Varma Valia Koi Thampuran, there are several temporary use of words, which have been changed in the later books according to the needs of times.
- 5 P.I. Sankaranarayanan, Isope Kathakal (Stories), D.C. Books, Kottayam.
- 6 These stories, which are included in the text books of Kerala Varma Valia Koi Thampuran, are taken from the *Kerala Varma Kathakal* of Dr. Thikkurissi Gangadharan.
- 7 A Glossary of Literary Items.
- 8 M.G.K. Nair, *Sahitya Samjna Kosam*.
- 9 Bailey and CMS Press, *Jnananikshepam*-Bailey Jubilee Souvenir, 1993, p.41.
- 10 See chapter II on Editors of *Jnananikshepam*.
- 11 See Diversity in articles and authors in Chapter III.
- 12 V.T. David, p.42.
- 13 *Ibid*.
- 14 Besides the pencil sketches of Mrs. Henry Baker Junior, which number the majority of sketch, other ladies have also contributed to the *Jnananikshepam* news magazine. There are pictures in line art style and half tone style. There are also diverse artistic seals like FAB, F.B., M.B.
- 15 Like elite Brahmins, Missionaries were also in the habit of using plural as a mark of respect. e.g. 'We' instead of 'I'.
- 16 New essays.
- 17 Dr. N. Sam., *op.cit.* p.170-71.

VII

THE MICROSCOPE AND THE TELESCOPE TO HISTORY

A Newspaper is a sheet of paper on which is printed news that occur each day. A newspaper also contains news of a particular period. News is just a causeway between the long and vast avenues of the past and the future extending to eternity. The length of the present, for a newspaper, is determined by its seasonal (contemporary) relevance. The important factor for a news magazine is that which had happened in the previous month; for a weekly, it is what to place in the present week; a daily newspaper writes about the news of the previous day. News bulletin of All India Radio (AIR) and Television reports the happenings of today, when, where, how long etc.

When newspapers lose contemporary relevance it becomes a news account of the past. Today's daily newspaper will be a historical record tomorrow and the news of today is tomorrow a part of history (of yesterday). From this perspective, a newspaper being published 150 years ago, during the period when there were not enough books and publications, is certainly a historical document, which helps to study certain historical facts and events. *Jnananikshepam* is at the same time a microscope as well as a telescope of the history of 150 years ago. When we today evaluate the writings and events recorded in it, they are our open windows to history.

Yesterday news, today history

In the initial issues of *Jnananikshepam*, the Punjab region occupied the predominant place in its news coverage. In the issue no.2 of Dhanu 1848, there was a report of the opposition to the Punjab Resident by the Diwan who was sent to Sultan as well as the killings of the Europeans. In issue 3, news report is about the continuation of the animosity between the Diwan and the English leading to conflicts between them. In the issue 5, the English had conquered Sultan and the Diwan surrendered. The news of issue no. 6 reports the discovery of gold and gold ornaments worth thirty lakhs of Rupees by the English soldiers and that the rebel Singhs were defeated. The news of issue 7 was that the Chief of the Singhs had surrendered and the country became the property of the Company (East India) and the next issue carried the formal announcement that with effect from March 29, 1849, the sun had set on Punjab region which would then onwards be considered as part of the country governed by East India Company. Reading all these news together, we get a picture of the history of India being crushed under the iron fist of colonial hegemony of the British in the form of East India Company.

Just as one could gather the history of subjugation of Punjab by the British, from the pages of *Jnananikshepam*, there are also other important historical facts which could be obtained from the news magazine. Two events could be examined here. For the sake of examples one is the controversy among the Brahmins of Konkan area regarding a statue of the god of Thirumala; and two popular uprising which historians have called the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857.

God of Thirumala and the Konkans

The Konkans are the Gauda Saraswata Brahmins who had

migrated to Kerala from the Konkan region. They worship Thirumaladevan or Venkateswaran. There arose serious differences of opinion among the Konkan people residing in Kochi and Travancore, which not only led to a communal divide among but a conflict between the two countries and their kings. It received a political colour as the Kochi-Travancore resident and the Madras government had to adopt quite a strict position in the matter.

Due to religious persecution, the Gauda Saraswata Brahmins migrated first to Kozhikode, which was under the rule of Zamorins. They had to undergo suppression there as well. This led them to Kochi, where the King of Kochi gave them asylum in a special area. In this asylum they built a temple in which a statue of Venkiteswara was installed. The statue was covered with gold as well. "According to legend this statue of Venkiteswara belonged to the King of Vijayanagaram during the 15th and 16th centuries when the empire of Vijayanagaram was at the height of its glory."

The Konkans were involved in commercial transactions and depended on the King of Kochi and the Portuguese who were the rulers of Kochi then. At that time in A.D. 1662 the Dutch attacked the Portuguese Fort; but they lost the war and retreated. Based on the allegation that the Konkans had supported the Dutch, the Portuguese assaulted the Konkans and confiscated their property and materials. Somehow the Konkans saved the Venkateswara statue from the hands of the Portuguese and escaped to Udayamperur. In 1663 the Dutch attacked a second and captured Fort of Kochi.

Under the protection and friendship of the Dutch, the Konkans again became prosperous. But they were not satisfied with having an asylum in Kochi alone. In order to have the ability to move around in hostile circumstances they rushed to set up

asylums in far away places as well. Thus they migrated to areas like Tripunithura, Paravur, Thuravur, Shertallai, Alappuzha, Purakkad, Kollam, Kottayam and several other places and established residences there.

Situation being this, the queen mother died. The monthly ritual was to be conducted at Ernakulam. Saktan Thampuran (King Rama Varma) demanded the unrefined sugar needed for the banquet should be supplied by the Konkans. The quantity of the Jaggery¹ to be given was also determined. But considering themselves strong the Konkans, objected to the King's order. But the main leader of the Konkans and the authority of the Thirumala Temple Council named Devaresakini agreed to supply the material alone. He had commercial transactions in several places. The hub of his commercial activities, including his residence was within the Fort of Cochin, under the control of the Dutch.

But Devaresakini reneged his word of providing sugar (molasses) at the promised time. Therefore it could not be distributed at the scheduled time for it. The King was displeased as recorded in his biography². It appears that since Kini was inside the Cochin Fort, he could take a stand against King's order. Subsequent events are recorded by the King's biographer in the following manner.

King summoned the Chief Captain Panikkar and commanded.

"When I awake tomorrow, I want to see the head of Devaresa."

Captain Panekkar carried out the King's order and the head of 'Kini' became the first sight of the king in the morning (Kani).

The King gave further orders to the Captain.

“Panikkar has to take some more action. Due to Devaresa, the Konkans have become arrogant and rebel against us. We must retaliate by plundering the properties of the Konkans as well as of the temple council and attach them to Government property. Take the required soldiers for the job. Do it tomorrow itself.”

Immediately Panikkar submerged the head of Devaresa with a stone attached to it in a lagoon and proceeded to implement King's order in other matters. Thus he, with soldiers, went to Kochi and plundered the properties of Konkans. Fearing that the statue of their god also would be plundered, some Konkans, using a stratagem, took the statue and ran away and sought refuge in Travancore. In the treasury of Kochi government, there are utensils on which are inscribed the words “Property of Thirumala Devaswom,” which can be seen today.

By 984 of the Malayalam era, the problems in Kochi and Travancore subsided. There were no crisis situations relating to internal nor external affairs. Both countries enjoyed peace and achieved prosperity. In such congenial circumstances, the Konkans began attempts to bring back the Thirumala statue from Alappuzha to Kochi. They submitted memoranda continuously to the Kings and the residents to achieve their objective. And eventually their efforts found success. On 26-10-986 the Travancore King gave permission to the Konkans of Kochi to take back the Venkiteswara idol to Kochi.

But the authorities of Ambalapuzha represented by Kali Parameswaran who had favoured the Konkans of Alappuzha not only did not implement the order, but necessary steps were taken to ensure the continuation of the idol in Alappuzha itself. Subsequently King of Kochi himself wrote a letter to Col. Munroe on the matter. The contents of the letter were that in order to find relief for his incurable disease, astrologers have

prescribed daily rituals of worship in front of the Venkiteswara idol. To this to happen the idol has to be brought back. But Munroe refused this request. At the same time the Konkans of Alappuzha conducted an astrological divination to find out the divine will in the matter. They used this ruse to proclaim that the deity did not want to travel north of Alappuzha. The government and the people of both countries firmly believed that the presence of the Thirumala deity was necessary for their commercial prosperity. This made the tug-of-war between the group of the same community in two places to become intensified. With the support of the governments of both places, each group formulated strategies and counter-strategies to achieve their objective. Countless memoranda and counter memoranda were submitted. Diwan Subba Rao and others supported the Konkans of Alappuzha to a very great extent.

Situation being this, Travancore government decided to build a permanent asylum for the Thirumala deity in Alappuzha. During that period, the Diwan was Krishna Rao and the Resident Lt. Gen. W. Kallan. Following the royal order land was acquired, wood and construction materials were obtained. Government decided to provide support in all matters, including the anointment of the idol. But Kochi was not prepared to keep quiet. They again submitted a memorandum on 22-2-1023 to bring back the deity to Kochi. But Travancore challenged it with a counter memorandum on 29-5-1023. Konkans of Kochi tried several gambits to obstruct the installation of the idol and its anointing at Alappuzha. Nevertheless, as instructed by the Travancore government, the temple was named Anantanarayanapuram and in Edavam 1027, the Venkateswara deity was installed there.

But after nine months the situation of the Thirumala idol changed again.

In the night of 27th Makaram 1028, the idol was stolen. This news made the Travancore king and the Resident very angry.

The idol of the deity reached Kochi in the morning of the 28th. It was installed there accompanied by festivities. Celebrations included ritual worship, ritual fireworks, distribution of sweets and materials for chewing (betel, arecanut, etc). The Kochi government also set up a guard by a group of soldiers around the temple and the deity.

If there were a series of events of this kind today, how would our newspapers break the news story? How would they respond to them? The newspapers would be filled with the history of Kochi and Travancore, ancient stories of the political relationship between the two countries, the history of Konkans, news, pictures, scopes and so on. These would continue not just for a day or a week, but till they receive another news event. For the reason that the Thirumala deity episodes happened in our own land, they might have achieved equal importance as the terrorist attack on World Trade Centre and American's Afghan war. *Jnananikshepam*, with studied impartiality broke news for months regarding the Thirumala deity. Perhaps this impartiality was observed taking into consideration the readers of *Jnananikshepam* in both countries, the Resident of both countries as well as the Madras government.

We begin to read the news of Thirumala idol from the time it was stolen. The news of the theft of the idol in *Jnananikshepam* had the look and appearance of an investigative report. We can read the long story with the title 'Thirumala Deity' in the 53rd issue of Meenam 1853 in the following manner.

Thirumala Deity

After the midnight of 27th Makaram this year, the Konkans of Kochi had stolen the deity installed in Ananthanarayanapuram.

This deity, in fact, was installed in Kochi some years ago. Later at the time of the military assault of Tippu³, fearing this emerald studded statue would fall into the hands of Muslims, the idol and other related things were taken away by the priest who conducted the worship of deity, to Alappuzha and was kept hidden in the temple dining hall of Thirumala deity for over 60 years. In the meantime Kochi people several times demanded that the idol would be taken away by the people of Kochi, armed guard by the soldiers of the king was provided to the deity in the dining hall. But becoming aware that a deity with rich wealth should not be kept in the dining hall of another Thirumala idol, the Travancore government built a new temple outside the district court of Alappuzha and named it Ananthanarayanapuram. At an auspicious time on the 21st of Medam⁴ the deity was installed and the ritual worship etc. were conducted. The priest Ramachandra Vadyar who was conducting the rituals was the same priest who had taken the idol from Kochi to Alappuzha. There was an agreement that this priest would be sent back. On 27th of Makaram, a person from Kochi visited Ananthanarayanapuram temple to make offerings to the deity. During that night with the help of temple servants, who knew about the idol of Kochi, removed the Thirumala deity alias Venkiteswara, the statue of Lakshmi and other two goddesses together with jewellery worth forty thousand rupees. These were placed in a basket, the top of which was filled with plantains and bread. They went out of the temple by the Northern Gate. When the guards, who were half asleep, challenged them, the Vadyar had replied that they were taking bread and fruit to those who did not receive them earlier and some of the fruits were given to guards as well. So the guards let them go. With the basket, they reached the boat jetty near the court. There they reached the boat and reached Kochi in the morning of 28th. On arrival at Kochi the Konkans crowded around the deity and took it to old temple, where it

was installed before. It is learnt that soon it will be installed in a new temple. In the morning of 28th itself information about the theft. The government of Travancore issued a proclamation regarding a reward of 10,000 Rupees to the one who apprehends the thief.⁵ Apart from the loss of Thirumala deity, other inauspicious happenings also took place. These were: chariot race at Suchindram was scrapped; the hand of the deity at Thiruvalla was broken; The flag mast of the deity of Aranmula broke down; In the holy courtyard of the deity at Ambalapuzha a cow gave birth (Issue 53, Meenam 1853).

Proclamation

This proclamation is made to all the people. The idol of Thirumala Deity installed in the Ananthanarayanapuram temple and other idols which were in the temple as well as the holy ornaments worn by the idols have been stolen. It is known that the theft has been committed by the ugly faced Vadyar alias Ramachandra Vadyar during the night of March 27. Anyone who finds out where the idol is placed and also apprehend the Vadyar along with the idol would receive a reward of ten thousand Rupees from the treasury. The recognition marks of the ugly faced Vadyar is written below. Therefore everyone is asked to search seriously and with interest for the idol and the Vadyar who took it away and find them and give the information to the government. The successful person is asked to collect the reward amount from the treasury.

Diwan Krishnarayar

29th 1028

(In issue 53, Meenam 1853).

News

Issue 12, December 1856.

The Treasury at the Travancore capital has found that the idol taken away from Alapuzha to Kochi by the Konkans using a stratagem had been valued as an emerald. Therefore orders have come from England to return the idol to Alappuzha and re-installed in Thirumala temple there. Later news regarding the Thirumala deity was published in the 15th and 17th issue of *Jnananikshepam*.

News

Issue 15, March 1857.

“In order to take back the Thirumala Deity, a company of 200 soldiers reached the border of Travancore state. Konkans took three idols to the Resident, who was told to select the idol which was brought from Alappuzha. Thus one of the idols reached Alappuzha. Now it is confidentially heard that after the journey, the deity has changed its appearance. Nevertheless the deity has been obtained. Everyone is happy.”

News

Issue 17, May 1857.

The information regarding the Thirumala idol provided in the issue 15 of *Jnananikshepam* is not factually correct. The news sent by post from Kochi is that regardless of the several requests made by the government, the Konkans did not part with the idol. Subsequently some prominent people among them travelled to Madras and apprised the Governor of the matter. The Governor ordered that the idol must be taken to Alappuzha. It was also put in writing that people from the government who would be arriving to take the deity should not

be harmed in any way. Subsequently the Thahasildar and others came to ask for the key to the temple; but seeing no one in the street, they, with the help of a blacksmith, opened the lock. A Brahmin was asked to take the idol, which was covered in silk in front of the court of Ernakulam and placed in a box and was seated. The box was sent to Alappuzha. But when it reached there, people who saw the idol recognized that it was not the statue taken away from Alappuzha. Therefore, they entered the temple in Kochi a second time, took away two idols together with the ornaments. This being the fact, the story of Konkans giving the idol away is not true.”

The Popular Uprising of 1857

The history of politics of the popular rebellion which started on May 10th, 1857 and lasted for more than 2 years has been discussed several times in different versions. This uprising had shaken up almost all the areas of the country. Although the East India Company and the British attempted to regard it as an insignificant event by dubbing it as ‘Sepoy Mutiny’, but the rebellion actually subsided only after the curtain falling on the authority of East India Company in India. Moreover, a re-thinking began on calling the popular revolt as the National Freedom Movement. Therefore the general perception regarding the revolt was that it originated from the strong dissatisfaction that persisted about the long rule by East India Company⁶. However it had neither careful planning, nor a common national aim, nor a visionary leadership. Nevertheless it was highly significant to observe that the uprising was against the foreign power. And that one of the causative factors leading to the rebellion was the attempt to merge the regional kingdoms one after another into the area under the company rule through political craftiness. Regardless of the causative factors, its objectives and subsequent results, it was indeed a

national movement⁷ launched by the Indian people. It would be interesting to peruse the pages of *Jnananikshepam*, how the magazine carried the news about it.

The popular revolt began in May 1857. In the issue 18 of the next month June 1857, *Jnananikshepam* carried the news that “The 34th army of Bengal had been put under great punishment by refusing salaries and pensions to them because they had shown disobedience to the orders of their masters.” From the news story ‘The local soldiers of the Bengal army in revolt’, it can be concluded that the uprising had been widespread in Bengal. In the news of September issue we read that “the revolt in North Western Bengal had not subsided”. And there was uprising in Delhi, Banaras and Ayodhya as well. It can also be learned that many local armies and several regional kings were supporting the company.

There was a rather curious item of news in the September issue. It mentioned that the Travancore King had donated 3000 Rupees to the company soldiers who were injured in the encounter with the rebels.

The September issue had also reported that White soldiers had arrived to suppress the revolt. On the 17th of July 27 seven large ships full of soldiers were sent to Bengal from England. On 29th of the same month another 33 steam ships filled with soldiers began their journey to India. These were the infantry, cavalry and gunners. At no time in the past no army had marched with so many arms and weapons. When after 6 weeks they reached India, the number of White soldiers in the country had risen to seventy thousand.

In the 22nd issue of October 1857 the news story portrayed a picture of the revolt and its suppression becoming more widespread and severe. The soldiers fighting against the company captured Delhi town and installed the Pathan King

living in the town as their king. But due to the presence of the English army they could not go outside the fort. Hence they had resorted to plundering and robbing the merchants and their shops. They took away and killed the Diwan who had been appointed by the company. In this situation, the king requested help of the Commander in Chief to protect him and his family. The Commander had replied that 'According to the order issued by the company no agreement was to be made with the king and that people who were fighting with weapons should be gunned down.'

A request was again made to punish the killers with death, but allow others to go. But no reply to this request was received. In the meanwhile 3000 sepoys among the people who tried to flee from the Fort at night were killed on the bridge called 'Newjapka'. The English army used the fire power of cannons to break down the walls of the Fort and on September 15th captured the king and several prominent rebels.

When the rebellion broke out in Ayodhya, some Hindu Landlords made few white men and women hide in a safe haven and thus saved them. And these white people were taken to the Commander in Chief and entrusted their care to him. In return the Hindu Lords were rewarded with honours and high positions.

The soldiers sent by the company to suppress the rebel sepoys in Kanpur near Ayodhya and Bareilly not only subdued the rebels, but the weapons and the wealth taken from the treasury by them were brought back. A proclamation was made to the effect that reward would be given to those who capture and bring to the authorities Nanu, who had committed high treason. The proclamation had also stated that one who brings at least his head alone would be given a reward of Six thousand Rupees. From the issue of October we understand that the

rebellion had spread to Moradabad as well.

The November issue (1857) of *Jnananikshepam* had an abundance of news regarding the uprising. The news story begins with the assassination of three princes of the Pathan King who returned to power in Delhi with the support of the rebels. Much before the East India Company began its rule in India, Delhi had been the main town of the Mohammedans among those who professed Hindu religion. After the English assumed power, the Pathan King was given protection as well as a monthly pension of one lakh of Rupees. He enjoyed this privilege for nearly 67 years. But on last May 15th he enticed some company troopers and captured royal power and decided to eliminate Christians altogether. However, had already reported in the September issue, the soldiers of the company re-captured the Delhi Fort and assassinated three princes of the kings in places where the Christians were unjustly detained. It was also decided to bring the apprehended King to Bengal and give him suitable punishment.

The rebel known as Nanu had gone into hiding after he was wounded in the firing while escaping from the Fort in Lucknow. A reward of Rs.50,000 was announced as the reward to anyone who were to bring him alive to the authorities. It was rumored that this cruel individual was a baron belonging to the caste of Traders.

Another news story in the same issue concerns the King of Travancore. The King had appeared to be more devoted to the company than the company itself. The situation in the country was congenial to the local kings of India to compete each other for the favours of the East India Company. The King of Travancore did not let this opportunity go in waste. *Jnananikshepam* had reported: "As soon as the King of Travancore received these information, he sent gifts to the

wounded soldiers. He was so happy that he went to offer gifts to the preceptors and others, as well.”

More news were carried in the November issue. Lucknow was the power centre of Nana Saheb, who was described as inspirational intelligence behind what the historians allude to as the popular rebellion of Fifty Seven. The Mohammedans there were on the side of the sepoys who had revolted. But barons like Man Singh, Sivnarayanan Singh favored the white men. Finally the Mohammedans were suppressed.

In northern section the power of Mohammedans was debilitated. Fifty thousand Rupees was announced as reward to those who captures Nanu Sahib. Main cities in the country were on a collection drive for money to be given to the wounded soldiers in North Western States.

In further issues there were accounts of killings that made blood flow as part of uprising. December 1857 issue reported that as the rebels were contained in Ayodhya and other places, 29 men belonging to the race of the king were either hanged or shot by rifles. In issue of March 1857, we read that Rathga Fort in Deccan and its self-proclaimed King Pesil Mahamitta were captured by the English army from Bombay. Nana would be caught soon. Bellam Geri, Jigga and Parkabad were hanged. Rebels were made to run from Ayodhya to Lucknow and killed there, which gave the information that the popular revolt goes from the present to the past. In the May issue 1858 more graphic account were given about destroying the rebels in Bengal and giving rewards to those who took a stand against the rebels and helped the company rule. “Prominent rebels were put to death by cannon fire. Some were hanged... The two kings who were with the King of Delhi were exiled to Islands till death. In the book ‘One Thousand eight hundred fifty seven’ by Surendranath Sen, the following words in the introduction to

the book scripted by Abdul Maulan Kalam Azad were worth remembering. There were not a single tree in Allahabad on which the body of an unfortunate Indian was not hanging.”

The important news breaking story of the June issue was the proclamation by the British queen, in which Her Royal Highness offered amnesty to those who surrendered with their weapons. But the killers, who were disobedient, were not included in this reprieve.

There were two news stories more in the June issue which were interesting. “Order had come from England that the Delhi King, his Chief wife and their son be banished to Cape of Good Hope and that they be allowed to live there where the Africans were living under security... Some sepoys living under guard in Andaman Islands had escaped; but they were eaten by the cruel people in the island.”

The reporting in *Jnananikshepam* gave the impression that sepoy revolt was treated as an insignificant happening and that many local kings helped to quell the uprising. Amidst this partisan coverage of news two things stand out.

1. The more the rebellion was attempted to be suppressed, the more it spread to new and more areas.
2. There were many local kings who had supported the rebellion.

In the issue of August 1858, the news were:

“Since the King Gaikward of Gujarat did not take part in the sepoy revolt, the company has reduced the annual tax given by him by an amount of three and a half lakhs of Rupees... After hanging the Nawab of Jagja, his property drawing a tax of three lakhs of Rupees and other titles were given to the King of Pathia. Similar properties also were gifted to kings of Bikaner and Nabba, who were also given the title ‘The Faithful Sons of

Her Royal Highness'. To the King of Poyenia, who brought the head of a rebel to the Commander of the army, was given a hundred thousand Rupees and a concession in land tax. The rebels were dispersed in tens and hundreds; these were being collected by the government cavalry. In a big dense forest Amir Singh and others were hiding. The cavalry and the infantry had surrounded them and thousands of workers, receiving wages from the government were clearing the forest. The Sepoys who were exiled to Andamans were digging wells and clearing the forests there. Nanu Sahib and others are keeping the uprising going in Ayodhya. But the proclamation of general amnesty has turned many away from the revolt and to ask for pardon. The Kings of Banda and Manpur belonged to this category. They were provided with amnesty to live on bail.

The sepoys who were driven away from Bengal were proceeding towards South. They met two groups who were being driven away from Bombay and Madras. All these groups jointly travelled towards Gwalior. There some more rebels joined them. They fought valiantly, but failed in the conflict. This led the rebels to plunder the country. The King of Gwalior was young, intelligent and wealthy. He with the royal household and many others sought refuge with the English. Within ten to fifty days the army of the company arrived to kill the rebels and cleared the Gwalior state of its enemies. The Resident Sahib installed the king on the Gwalior throne with popular jubilation accompanied by Gun Salute.

Two small Brahmin barons from Bombay and a Thahasildar who were removed from service attempted to create a revolt. But within ten days of their rebellion, their forts known as Nagunda Land Koppal were destroyed. The Brahmins were hanged and their supporters were decimated with cannon fire.

The news regarding the rebellion covered by the October,

November and December issues of the news magazine were concerned with the dreaded rebel Tandia Thoppi. We see him retreating north to the mountains of Nagpur. "Tandia Thoppi, the dreaded rebel and his two thousand supporters were hiding in Rajaputana. However, escaping from the Cavalry which was after them, they went towards north through northern mountains of Nagpur. In Ayodhya a great Baron named Mathu Singh and very many others with him came down from their mountain forts in the forests and accepted the offer of amnesty proclaimed by the queen. Surrendering their weapons, they went away.

In the beginning of the new year we see that the popular uprising had been weakened to a large extent. Nana Sahib with his life and Tandia Thoppi in his death had to depart from their motherland. The February issue of 1859 had reported: "The rebellion in Ayodhya had been more or less suppressed. The wife of the previous king and Nana Sahib along with 500 sepoys had crossed over to Nepal. They had made known that, if their life was safe, they were ready to surrender."

Reports in the May issue were:

Tandia Thoppi was betrayed by his own friends and was put under the hangman's noose.

Ayodhya's capital Lucknow as well as Delhi were rebuilt. These were turned into residential areas of the English officials. An order that Mohammedans should not be allowed to stay in these towns and their borders came into force.

The rebels who sought asylum in Nepal were subjugated.

People of North India had been ordered to surrender their weapons.

After the death by disease, nearly thousand people were left in the three armies which had joined the revolt. Five hundred

men of the English Cavalry decimated them directly.

The waves of the popular uprising of 1857 had also reached the shores of Kerala. A news story in the August issue 1859 of *Jnananikshepam* had this to say: "An order had been published in the matter of looting of rice at Kollam. If anyone reports on the pilferage they have suffered, the government would pay the value of the lost articles. Moreover, if any sepoy had harmed someone, he would be punished by the Madras government, which will also compensate for the harm done."

By the end of 1859, it could not be said the fires of rebellion had been completely extinguished. Here and there smouldering embers were there. But from the report in *Jnananikshepam* we could come to the conclusion that the rebels had been isolated.

The August issue reported about the dire poverty and starvation among the sepoys in Bengal as well as the death of nearly 300 sepoys in Ayodhya due to famine and starvation. Nana Sahib had also made known that he was ready to surrender.

From the November issue:

It was rumored that Nana Sahib and other prominent leaders who were hiding in the Himalayan Valley were dead, the armies of the King of Nepal and of the English were searching the forests.

The King of Ayodhya was residing in Bengal enjoying pensionary privileges.

When the New Year dawned the popular uprising had become an important part of Indian history. Even before that, the might of British Empire had crushed the babe of revolt beginning to show signs of life, that too, with the support of Indians themselves. It was like the tree submitting itself to the axe which was going to cut it down. According to the news report of the January issue of 1860, Governor General Lord

Canning had a meeting with the kings and barons of North India. Rewards were given to those who were faithful to the English Government.

The King of Nepal captured nearly 2000 sepoys and their prominent leaders, hiding in the forests of Nepal and handed them over to the English Police. Christians were killed; wealthy Brahmins and other merchants were persecuted; many people were sentenced to death, the remaining people were shipped to Andaman Islands, where they were subjected to hard labour.

Nana Sahib and prominent rebels were affected by fever in the forest and died there.

Jnananikshepam ended its reporting of the 1857 popular uprising with its January issue, 1860. It was significant to observe that the news stories ending its reporting of the revolt relate to the rewards given by the Governor General and the death of Nana Sahib somewhere in the forests of Nepal. This implied that by December 1859, the revolt had finally come to an end. A rebellion that extended from May 1857 to December 1859, which implied that it had lasted 2 years and seven months. Was it, as British historians had recorded, a little mutiny by the sepoys? Or an angry explosion which resulted from the realization that people are slaves in their own country?

Jnananikshepam perceived the 1857 popular uprising through the eyes of East India Company. The news stories in *Jnananikshepam* manifested the same approach as that of the British empire related to the revolt. To them it was not the home land. It was a challenge to established rule. Mauna Abdul Kalam Azad was one of the architects of Indian National Movement before independence as well as one of the prominent leaders, who decided the nature and quality of Indian State after independence. His words are quite revealing:

“The British people, fully submissive to their queen, fought well. They, both women and men, believed that sepoy mutiny was a national catastrophe which had to be faced whole heartedly for success and survival.” *Jnananikshepam* published the news regarding obstinacy. It did not find it difficult to abuse the sepoys as ‘robbers’⁸ or to wait for the news of destruction⁹. *Jnananikshepam* took great care to publish the killings of the rebels and to elaborately highlight the rewards given by the British to the local rulers faithful to them. *Jnananikshepam* wrote in its news story that “Three armies which rebelled in Kanpur died due to disease. Only a thousand of them were left. And these people were, on Medam 13th, destroyed completely with not even a single person remaining, by 500 soldiers of the English Cavalry¹⁰.” Soon after this news story, *Jnananikshepam* justifies the cruel action. Thus: “It was just judgement against their acts of murder and other cruel activities.” The British rulers propagated that killing thousands who had no food nor health nor weapons to fight, in cold blood was execution of great justice! *Jnananikshepam* wrote its news stories believing that what the British did during sepoy rebellion was God’s own truth. The other dimension of this perception is: what else a newspaper, which operated in obedience to the company regulations and in the shadow of a king (of Travancore) who carried out the dictates of the company, could do?

Notes

- 1 In some documents, it is sugar and in others unrefined sugar. The term molasses comes from English documents.
- 2 Thirumanassile Jivacharithram, Bhashaposhini 9, issue 12, 1080 Karkkadakam.
- 3 Even though reference in *Jnananikshepam* is to the attack of Tipu Sultan, the Venkiteswara idol was removed to Alapuzha at the time of persecution of Konkani by the Saktan Tampuran of Kochi. There are also other stories regarding the removal. Idols from Guruvayoor, Kozhikode, Tellicherry also have been removed to temples such as Ambalapuzha. They were also taken

back to these places after the political uncertainty had disappeared. But the Thirumala idol is not included in this lot.

- 4 P.K. Narayan Pillai states that the consecration ceremony was conducted in Edavom, 1027. (An Expedition from Travancore to Cochin).
- 5 Diwan Krishna Rao asked the commercial agent of Alapuzha, Crawford to inquire into the theft and Rs.10,000/- was promised as reward to those who provide information on the theft. But Crawford did not do as requested by the Diwan. But this view is contested by some.
- 6 “In the light of available evidence we are therefore forced to the conclusion that the uprising of 1857 was not the result of careful planning nor were there any master minds behind it. What happened was that in the course of hundred years the Indian people developed a distaste for the Company’s rule... The affair of the greased cartridge did not create a new cause of discontent in the army, but supplied the occasion when the underground discontent came out in the open.” Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad in the Foreword of ‘Eighteen Fifty Seven’ by Surendranath Sen II ed. 1958.
- 7 Unfortunately, often the indigenous people became enemies and were against them as well.
- 8 Very many robbers are staying in the forests and are destroying the huts. November 1858.
- 9 Only two are left. News about their capture is awaited. *Ibid*.
- 10 May 1859.

VIII

EDITING, LAYOUT, TYPOGRAPHY

The Editor is the soul and the supreme spirit (*Jivatma* and *Paramatma*) of a newspaper. It is the responsibility of the Editor to determine the nature of the content of the newspaper and its policy so that it realizes the objectives of publication.

This perception of who should be an Editor begins with the appointment of Thomas Banson as the editor of 'The Times' by its owner John Walter (the second). Thus the editor received the authority and full responsibility of deciding the content and policy of a newspaper¹. This action of the Times and Walter projected the editor as the captain of the news ship. And this was a very significant milestone in the history of newspapers.

Much before *Jnananikshepam* began its publication in 1848, there were many periodicals and very many reputed editors in the world, particularly in the arena of English publications. John Hawksworth began *Jnananikshepam*, taking into account the popular newspapers and the well known editors on the one hand, and the requirements of Malayalam and its limitations on the other. The attentive presence of an editor, conscious of his authority and duty, can be perceived in the policy statement of the news magazine, its motto and its contents right up to the regulation copy. John Hawksworth, who was a scholar, committed to the good of the society, becoming the editor of *Jnananikshepam*, right from its inception was greatly helpful to the progress of the publication as it received the right guidance

and speed from the beginning.

The introduction to the first issue of *Jnananikshepam* was the declaration of its policy perceptions. Among the three things, stated as the third item, only one concerned Christianity. Others were about 'Medicine and astronomy'. Nevertheless there indeed was a vested interest in the mind of the people behind the news magazine that it should be a periodical useful for the promotion of Christianity among the people of other religions as well as for the confirmation of Christians in their faith. But the objective of *Jnananikshepam* was never the manifestedly apparent promotion of religion. Its main aim was to provide news and to propagate Western knowledge. However, Hawksworth and his colleagues did believe that fulfillment of this aim would indirectly help religious promotion as well. As a matter of fact, it did help missionary activities in two ways. One, by promoting Western knowledge, an awareness was created among the people that there were other forms of knowledge which need to be accepted, which in turn led to independent thinking. The very strong flow of light and wind of Western knowledge removed the cobwebs that had enveloped the ancient knowledge, from the Eastern mind. Two, the rare and inevitable news magazine of high standard were accepted and welcomed by the people. This brought about recognition of its workers and their activities in the society at large.

Prose was the language form adopted by *Jnananikshepam* to communicate with people. From the perspective of general knowledge and development of language this was a defining decision which had far reaching consequences. (This fact has been discussed in detail elsewhere.) Due to the scarcity of writers in prose, the editor and his colleagues had resorted to the translation of English works into Malayalam in order to fill the pages of *Jnananikshepam*. But later the magazine encouraged the readers to write and prominence was given to their writings.

Initially the new writers of prose had very little self-confidence. For example, observe the ending of an article in issue 72 of Thulam 1854. "What I had written was not worthy to be shown in public; nevertheless if it is included in some corner of the magazine, I would be encouraged to write more." It was signed off as "a Hindu scholar who becomes enlightened by reading *Jnananikshepam*." Only a skilled editor could create writers from the readers, as a sculptor creates a figure out of stone, and encourage them to have their place in the Sun. This was a project of the editor which could easily be discovered in the work of the editor. This policy of transforming writers according to the need of the editor can be seen in the column on 'Astrology' and others in *Jnananikshepam*.

Right from the beginning, *Jnananikshepam* had been concerned with promoting the English astrological system, which received expansive circulation later in Kerala. This was not implemented all of a sudden. People were made to acquaint themselves with it gradually. Beginning with the first issue onwards Christian era (A.D.) and not the Malayalam era, to denote the year. However, the names of the months were given in Malayalam, which were well known to the readers. Thus the first issue was of Vrischika month 1848. Numerical figures were already in circulation in Kerala, then. *Jnananikshepam* used the digit in Tamilian Style (The same digit was used in Sanskrit mathematics). In other words Arabic digits were not used. In the first issues, names of Malayalam months were printed wherever release dates had to be indicated, such as in news and articles as well as on the title page. But by the month of Medam 1853, the months appearing in the content of the magazine; names of English months began to be used. E.g. February. But on the title page, the month in Malayalam continued. But the issue published after Meenam 1856, the month on the title page was also changed to English. E.g. After Meenam issue 3, 1856, next

issue was issue 4, April 1856. In order to support this a new column 'Calendar' (English calendar-Malayalam calendar) was begun from issue no. 11 (Kanni 1849). This column acquainted the readers with the Malayalam month and date, as well as the corresponding English month and date. All these are indication of how an editor can silently influence the mind of the readers.

The main function of the editor is editing. This transforms the compositions and enhances their quality. With the arrival of compositions from the general public, editing by the editor became an essential function. There is an editor's note about this in the issue 72 of Thulam (1854). In the news regarding 'Murder', 'Vomiting' and 'Dysentery' the editor had added the following note. "The news on murder, vomiting and dysentery have been sent by a dear Hindu. In these the news regarding murder has been abridged due to want of space."

Abridgement due to want of space is a normal activity of an editor. This is generally visible in the news stories of *Jnananikshepam*. Long reports were published only when it was absolutely necessary, otherwise reports were succinct, but inclusive. The news in brief style of today was then adopted by *Jnananikshepam*. This meant little space, more news.

The Editor of *Jnananikshepam* had made use of almost all the editorial techniques used today to arrange the chosen compositions for publication in each issue of news magazines. John Hawksworth and his successors were attentive to arrange in the manner and styles required for organizing the compositions suitable for publication in an eight paged magazine. Therefore *Jnananikshepam* could boast of permanent columns, serial columns, articles with pictures, supplements, corrective of previous issues and so on. Some examples of permanent columns were Regulation Copies (from the first issue onwards), monthly calculations (from Kanni 1849) English-Malayalam (till

issue 5 May 1856), Principle of foot measurement of shadow (from Kumbham 1850 till Makaram 1851).

Jnananikshepam had an abundance of serialized stories, which were published in more than one issue. It took several issues to complete the publication of news stories of geography, history, general knowledge. Other examples of serials were news about Greece, Egypt, A Horoscope for *Jnananikshepam*, Story of the English, Tipu Sultan, Priest and the Infant and so on. The first serialized novel in Malayalam was 'Pullelikunju' (cast difference – a conversation) scripted by Archdeacon Koshy. As mentioned elsewhere, the beautiful pencil sketches by Mrs. Henry Baker Junior had transformed *Jnananikshepam* into an illustrated magazine. And the news published along with the sketches were also articles of high standard. Picture which was published with each issue was the supplement page without number. Since the first page of the supplement was blank without any printing, the space therein was used for writing postal address of the readers.

The correction column also had its first appearance in *Jnananikshepam*. In the issue 65 of Meenam 1854 the following was given: "One mistake. In the last issue what was printed as one crore should be corrected as one lakh." There was also a correction regarding the story of Thirumala Deity. In issue 15 of March 1857 "Konkanis took three idols to the Resident and agreed that the idol which was taken away from Alapuzha would be given back by Konkanis". But this news story was corrected in issue 17 of May 1857. And the mistake which occurred in the December issue, 1859 was corrected in the March issue of 1960.

Several of the serials were stopped without completing them with the announcement "To be continued later". Due to defective planning by the editor of *Jnananikshepam*, or the infancy problems of the magazine, or a change in the editorial policy – whatever be the reason, the 'to be continued' stories

never again saw the light of the day. 'The travelogue written by two Parsees who boarded the ship to go to England' (stopped midway in the issue 7, Edavam, 1849); "The Regulation Copy" (Issue 55, Vrischikam 1855); the autobiography of the Prince of Kochi King; His Highness was the son Rama Varma of King Veera Kerala Varma. Rama Varma became a Christian with the name Jacob Rama Varma (Malayalam era 985). All these news stories were ended in midway with declaration 'to be continued'. But they were not ever continued. And the real reason for their discontinuation was unknown as well.

Jnananikshepam was also very conscientious in writing headlines to news stories and other literary compositions. Initially separate headlines were not provided for each news story. But writing headlines became the practice from the issue 4 of Kumbham 1849. Headings of all news were included in the contents. From the beginning itself separate titles were accorded to literary compositions and these were included in the contents. There was a system of giving the first word or words to literary compositions in the preparation of catalogue in Ancient Libraries. This abbreviated style known as 'incipits' was adopted by *Jnananikshepam* for the titles at least for some of the compositions. For example, in the first issue there were 'man', 'Language'. In the issue 19th of Edavam 1850, the short story on Mysore is mentioned as 'Mysore'. But most of titles related to contents were appropriate and meaningful. For example, the story of the 'Elephant and the Taylor'. There were also long headings which could be judged as appropriate. An instance of this was in the issue of December 1859 which was read as: "Honourable Police Deputy, Sirasthadara Ramayar had given a speech regarding police matters at the Aryasala Palace, details of which are given below". This was the report about a speech. Although it had long headline, it was printed in five lines in a centralised manner, which made it easy to be read. There

was no impropriety or lack of beauty either.

Earlier we had indicated the appropriateness of the motto 'Education is the most important wealth'² printed in the initial issues of *Jnananikshepam*. It was a great slogan that could be used by the successors as well. That verse began as the motto till issue 41 of Meenam 1852. In the issue 42, Medam 1852, the motto was re-written as:

“Honour everyone
Love the family of believers,
Fear God.
Honour the King.”

This was taken from 1 Peter 17, from the Bible. The slogans were altered again in the January issue of 1858. It adopted the 7th verse, first chapter Proverbs (Bible) as its motto:

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of Knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.” (In this issue the design of the title page was also changed. This is explained later.)

Another new motto was printed in the November issue 1860. “There is God; there is also one mediator between God and mankind, Christ Jesus, himself human.” (1 Timothy 1, 5). The changes in the motto could be perceived as the reflection of the changes that occurred in the policy and its administration of *Jnananikshepam*.

LAYOUT:

Some factors have to be pointed also regarding the layout of the news magazine. As far as a news magazine is concerned its typographic design is the same as layout. From this perspective, *Jnananikshepam* entertained very clear principles and attitudes in the matter of Layout.

Observe the title page of the first issue itself. The new

possibilities that the layout could execute due to the movable types and related materials are clear from it. A comparison with the title pages of *Rajyasamacharam* and *Paschimodayam* with the title page of *Jnananikshepam* would make the difference between them quite evident. Not only the layout of the title page of *Jnananikshepam* but its contents are also scientific. All the information required to be communicated about a periodical are available in it – That is to say, issue number, price, the Name of the Magazine in English and Malayalam, contents, place of publication, the year, month and date of printing and the motto or slogan of the magazine. The issue and the price were printed in 12 point. The title ‘TREASURY OF KNOWLEDGE’ was printed in 10 point, capital letters and the Malayalam, *Jnananikshepam* in 18 point. 10 point type was used for contents and motto. The place of publication, year, month and date (Kottayam, 1848 Vrischikam, 1st) were printed in 12 point type. The rules (lines) in the title page were printed in 1.5 point type. In order to prepare the title page not only the position of each item, but even the font size were determined after great deliberation as to their propriety.

12 point bold type was earmarked for headlines. In the first and second issues, headings were ‘left aligned’. From the third issue onwards they were, generally, ‘centre aligned’.

The words ‘Travancore State’, which is the main part of the title of Regulation copies were centralized and done in 12 point. Below them rules were beautifully drawn in 1.5 point. The next section of the title (6th regulation of 101 V) was printed centralized in 12 point as the next line. The number of sections, first, second, third... had been indicated in Tamil digits. These issues (in old Malayalam digits) and the text or running matter were in 12 point type. The gist of the main sections were printed in 10 point at the right side (recto) on the right page and at the left side (verso) on the left page. This arrangement, not only

adds to its beauty, but also makes it convenient to read. Where the regulation copy ended, the words “would see later” were also printed in 10 point type.

Some changes had been made from the 4th issue. Under the title and also at the end of articles a line was drawn in 1.5 point. This line indicated that the article had ended and the titles received an emphasis. Not only that, making use of the new facilities in composing, the magazine had grown³ to be a publication that attempted to bring about diversity in layout design.

These considerations must be grasped in combination with the periodic changes brought about in the title page of *Jnananikshepam*. Just as the motto was altered several times, the layout of the magazine also underwent alterations several times.

The issue of Makaram 1856 was published by the new editor after John Hawksworth went on furlow to England. This issue was numbered as one (1). There are also some changes in the layout of title page of this issue. The content details were avoided. Also waived were the place of publication, year and month in double lines using 1.5 point type.

Kottayam, the place of publication was removed from the title page. The custom of printing year in the English manner and the month in Malayalam continued, but they were positioned on the top right hand corner. The issue number continued on the top left hand corner. But immediately below it the price 1 chakram was also added. Left hand corner top of the title page was earmarked for 2 lines (one for issue, the second for price) for writing; and right hand corner top for 2 lines of writing (one line year, the other month). Both were underlined with 1.5 type. The ‘TREASURY OF KNOWLEDGE’ in one line was divided into two, in the middle of which an ornamental character was inserted. The line under *Jnananikshepam* was removed,

altogether. Below the motto some ornamental characters were drawn in one line. The monthly calculation was the first item; it was relegated to be the last one. The second item, the news, was also shunted to the end just before the monthly calculation. The rationale behind these changes appeared to be the publication of supplement along with the news. The news was not only consigned to the end section of the magazine, the practice of providing a headline to each news was also abandoned. Instead, each news was published as separate paragraphs.

The practice of printing the Malayalam month was cast aside with the issue 3 of Meenam 1856. Thereafter, from issue 4, 1856 April, the months were printed with the English names. And this change continued to remain as such. Further changes in the layout of the title page took place in the January issue of 1858. The issue and the price at the top corner on the left was abandoned. This was a significant alteration. Was this change due to making distribution of *Jnananikshepam* free of cost, or as the cost remained the same it need not be printed every issue. It is difficult to discuss the reason behind the change. The year and month (in Malayalam) was printed on the top right hand corner. The order of this was altered into month first, then year. Along with the change in the title page in this issue, the words of the motto was also subjected to change. Under the motto many ornamental characters had been printed in one line. This was renovated by making two small lines instead of one, in middle of which a small ornamental character was imprinted.

Periodical changes had occurred also in recording issue numbers. 86th issue was published in Dhanu 1855. But from the very next month onwards new numbers made their appearance. From (Makaram) January 1856 till December 1857, 1 to 24 issues were published. Thereafter the practice of printing issue numbers ceased to exist.

A close examination of the printing of *Jnananikshepam* would make one understand the peculiar qualities of the Malayalam typography in its initial stages. In order to make the printing appealing by increasing the space between lines, the practice of placing lead between the lines in composing was not adopted or it was not possible to do so. Because that necessitated molding of letters without any trace of vowel and consonants joined with vowels in the matter of some other letters, typeface had to be moulded in the same size as the top of the type body.

Combination letters were the Gordian Knots of Malayalam typography. The only option available was to mould them as they were. Besides, *Jnananikshepam* boasted of some logo types as well. For example is the way the price in the word 'Chakram' (copper coin) was printed. It was a specific logo type. Combination letters were moulded in different ways. In some combination letters, the first letter and second letter were moulded in complete form; in others the first letter was placed in front and the second behind and so on.

Conversational language was the basis and the model for production of books before modern printing. The standard of prose improved with the promotion of education and printing. Due to this the compositions during the period of 'Transcription' would have the style of conversational language in matters such as arrangement of letters, vocabulary and structure of sentences. It would also be irregular or disorderly⁴. Since the printing models of initial period followed the 'confusing habits' of the 'Transcription', there would be irregularity in matters like arrangement of letters. It is this confusing disorderliness behind the absence of definiteness in the arrangement of letters of words in the printing of *Jnananikshepam*. It was not the printer's devil which is responsible for the irregularity. *Jnananikshepam* has many words having more than arrangement of letters. Some examples are Company, Government, England, and others. As

printing became sturdy and widely accepted this confusing habit spread from the copying technique gradually ceased and the letter arrangement received an orderly and standardized form.

Using 10 point type instead of 12 point for composing matter (text) from issue 77 (Meenam 1855) has already been pointed out. The use of smaller font size was a method, which had already been experimented by the inventor of modern printing, Gutenberg himself to make printing more economical. The 42 line Bible, the first book printed by Gutenberg was one third the size of books printed before the arrival of movable types. His first experiment in printing 'Catholican', a book of general knowledge was to find out whether the size and price of the book could be reduced by using small sized font. However, *Jnananikshepam*, by using font in small size attempted to include more number of compositions. In the issue 77 almost three third of a page was composed in 10 point. At least a few articles in further issues were done in 10 point. From issue 16 of April 1857 onwards composing 'News' in smaller point helped to publish more items of news. Although more stories could be added, printing in 10 point in a column having the width of 24 took away some of the beauty of the layout. In order to avoid this inadequacy what could have been done was to compose in two columns of 24m in 11 or 11.5 font size⁵. Small letters and lengthy lines are not appropriate. Beauty lies in having less lengthy lines with small letters; it is also convenient for the reader.

The change that happened in the editorship of *Jnananikshepam* could be discerned from the pages of the magazine. The impression gained was that the issues between the old editor's relieving of responsibility and the assumption of duty by the new editor were somehow printed and published. The issue 84, Dhanu 1855 was published soon after John Hawksworth had gone away. The content of this issue is wanting in many

respects. Few articles; only one news story. And the main item in the magazine was the proclamation made by the Governor General Dalhousie to all the army units in India as well to the people of each region.

The issues from Makaram 1856 onwards considerable improvement in layout and contents could be noticed. The language of the contents also changed for the better. Space was allotted to poetry. More focus was placed on general knowledge. Articles covered topics such as Thermometer, Barometer, Steamship, Train, Wheat pulverizing machine and so on. Moreover the magazine maintained the importance given to news as well as articles on different nations. This situation persisted till the end of 1856. But from April to September 1856 the standard of the magazine deteriorated, content and layout took several steps backward.

In the beginning the titles were composed in 12 point bold type; but later fonts of different sizes were used. In issue 4, titles have appeared in 12 and 14 point. In some later issues 14 point light fonts had been utilized for titles. This differentiation is seen in rules (lines) as well. For example, in issue 3 (Makaram 1849) the outer rule is executed in 2 point and the inner rule in 1.5 point.

Jnananikshepam has made utmost use the possibilities and convenience inherent in movable types. This led to the development of types and other printing materials. The diverse interests of the readers and the limitation of an 8 page periodical had made editing really inevitable. The editors of *Jnananikshepam* had assumed this responsibility with an awareness of the real context and implemented the composition of the content of the magazine in a praise-worthy manner.

Notes

- 1 "Walter (John Walter II) also introduced the modern editor. Before his time the conductor of a newspaper had been little more than a combination of a make-up and sub-editor. After 1817 Thomas Barnes became the editor of the Times with entire responsibility not only for contents but for policy." P.M. Handover, *Printing in London*.
- 2 "*Jnananikshepam* had adopted the slogan 'Vidyadhanam Sarvadhanal Pradhanam (The most important wealth is knowledge) as its own long before Bhashaposhini accepted it as theirs." Dr. N. Sam., *op.cit.* p.165.
- 3 "He (the layout man) then avails himself of the practically unlimited facilities in the composing room..." Charles J. Felten, 'Layout'.
- 4 "Until the beginning of the 16th century, the forms of written discourse, Latin or vernacular, had continued to evolve after the pattern of spoken language. Manuscript culture had no power to fix language or to transform a vernacular into a mass medium of national unification." 'The Gutenberg Galaxy', Marshall McLuhan, p.229.
- 5 The size of the type follows closely on the choice of format, the larger the page, as a general rule, the larger the type should be. Legibility is the first demand on a typographer. And if long lines are printed in small type, the eye not only finds it difficult to pick up the beginning of each, but also tends to lose itself in the middle. If economy of space is necessary, recourse may be had to double column, when a smaller type can, of course, be used." Harry G. Aldis, 'The Printed Book'.

APPENDIX

JNANANIKSHEPAM AS VIEWED BY RESEARCHERS

HISTORY OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH

V.T. David.

In the 'History of the Anglican Church' scripted by V.T. David, *Jnananikshepam* has been alluded to under two titles, i.e., Christian Literature Scene and Christian Literary Publications. But the year in which *Jnananikshepam* was first published is different in both compositions.

"At a time when newspapers and magazines were quite scarce, a magazine was published from 1849 which was helpful to the growth of language. Many forget this."

HISTORY OF KERALA LITERATURE (4TH VOLUME)

Ulloor S. Parameswara Iyer

"Church Mission Society started the publication of a newspaper named *Jnananikshepam* from Kottayam in 1015. That was the first Malayalam newspaper in Kerala. It contained a synopsis of world news of the day, religious and social subjects,

improper practice of the Syrian Church, criticism of Roman Catholic teachings, etc. *Jnananikshepam* was circulated till 1042. Doctor Koshy was its publisher for many years."

MALAYALAM LITERATURE AND CHRISTIANS

Dr. P.J. Thomas

"A periodical named *Jnananikshepam* was being published by the Church Mission Society from Kottayam from 1848 to 1867. It was the second newspaper in Kerala. Archdeacon Koshy was its publisher for very many years."

HISTORY OF PROSE LITERATURE

T.M. Chummar

Historians have generally agreed that *Jnananikshepam* published from CMS Press, Kottayam was the first Malayalam newspaper. The History of Literature in Kerala (Kerala Sahitya Charitram), reputed to be an authoritative document as well as other books on our literature history also hold the same view. Most probably none of our historians have seen the first issues of this magazine. It was not lack of interest or search; but sheer unavailability. Because had the History of Language (Bhasha Charitram) scripted in 1881 by P. Govinda Pillai alluded to either this publication or to its beginnings, it could have accepted as an authoritative opinion. He did not make any such reference. In the Church History of Syrian Christians in Kerala (Malayalathulla Suriani Christianikalude Sabha Charitram) published in 1869 could have made some reference to this publication. But it did

not happen. Although *Jnananikshepam* is now circulated as the mouth piece of Mid Travancore Diocese (Dakshina Indian Sabha) its beginnings cannot be ascertained on the basis of the numbers now given to its issues. In the biography of Archdeacon Dr. Koshy published from CMS Press Kottayam in 1904 by E.V. John Padri the following is stated about *Jnananikshepam*: “The first newspaper born in our language was *Jnananikshepam*. It was published every month from the printing press of the Church Mission at Kottayam from 1840 onwards. It contained a synopsis of world events and many other matters related to religion and society. It also published opposition to Roman Catholic teachings as well as controversies regarding the inappropriate customs of the Syrian Church.” Being a part of a biography, it had a touch of authenticity. Therefore in Malabar Mail Jubilee Souvenir published in 1961, this writer had speculated that *Jnananikshepam* could have been the first publication. This speculation was made in an article in the Souvenir under the headline “First News Magazines.” The research-oriented writer A.D. Harisarma, wrote in the special issue of Sahitya Parishat in October 1963 opposing my speculation. He corrected the year of publication of *Jnananikshepam* as November, 1848. He provides two events as evidence to his contention. The first is the statement in the Church History of Travancore Kochi published in 1930 that *Jnananikshepam* began publication close to 1850. The other evidence is the statement of Edamaruku T.C. Joseph in which he affirms that he had seen the 65th number of *Jnananikshepam* dated March 1854. He also computes the same number backwards and comes to the conclusion that the year of the first publication would be November 1848. Since these two testimonies are unchanging and beyond doubt, there is no need to entertain any further uncertainty regarding the beginnings of *Jnananikshepam*.

However there is no certainty regarding the number of

years *Jnananikshepam* was published continuously without fail. There are conjectures that the publication of *Jnananikshepam* was suspended for a few years and was begun again from 1897 onwards. The main people at its helm were Geevarghese Kathanaar and Archdeacon Koshy during its initial stages. Several prose compositions of the Kathanaar saw the light of the day first through *Jnananikshepam*. The chief works of Archdeacon Koshy like ‘Pullelikunju’ were first published in *Jnananikshepam*.

125 MILESTONES OF JNANANIKSHEPAM

Prof. K.M. Cherian

“The diverse conclusions reached by historians of literature regarding *Jnananikshepam* are as follows:

- i. It began publication in 1840; therefore it is the first newspaper in Malayalam.
- ii. If the publication year is accepted as 1848, *Jnananikshepam* is the second newspaper.
- iii. It was published only till Malayalam era 1042; i.e. 27 years.
- iv. Published from AD 1848 to 1867; i.e. 19 years.
- v. Publication had been suspended for a few years; but recommenced in 1897.
- vi. The first issues of *Jnananikshepam* are unavailable.

The discovery of the first issue of *Jnananikshepam* has proved that majority of the above conclusions are without foundation of truth. Three different years, such as 1840, 1841, 1848 were bandied about as the publishing year of *Jnananikshepam*. The

discovery of the first issue convincingly establishes 1848 as the first publishing year. Therefore it becomes clear that *Jnananikshepam* is the third among the first publications. But only *Jnananikshepam* among them has survived. Hence it is the only newspaper that is continuously being published to the last 125 years. The contributory factors behind the conclusion that the magazine ceased publication for a few years are not clear. But the main reason could have been the unavailability of the first issues. But today all the issues of *Jnananikshepam* are available, which make the opinions of previous historians of literature contrary to facts. Moreover three reasons could be cited for ascribing the first position among ancient newspapers to *Jnananikshepam*.

- i. The only magazine which was being published for 125 years continuously without fail.
- ii. The first newspaper which began with the objective and systematic arrangements of a newspaper.
- iii. The first newspaper which abandoned the method of cyclostyling and adopted the method of printing by applying ink on the printing types (*Jnananikshepam* – Bailey Jubilee Souvenir 1973)

THE STREAM OF CULTURE

Moorkoth Kunjappa

“*Rajyasamacharam* began publication in 1847. Therefore it was the first newspaper in Malayalam.” This was the contention of Vidwan A.D. Harisarma. The contention was accepted as true by other scholars. The historical books, published after the statement of Harisarma, such as History of Prose Literature (Gadya Sahitya Charitram), by Vidwan Chummar have recognized *Jnananikshepam* as the first magazine in Malayalam.”

Now we have received more accurate information than the statement of Chummar. Prof. M.K. Cherian Kozhuvalloor has discovered the very first issue of *Jnananikshepam*. The prose in both *Rajyasamacharam* and *Jnananikshepam* is simple and beautiful. But references to Milky Way and the Narakasura found in *Jnananikshepam* are not available in *Rajyasamacharam*. Over and above this, the abundance of Sanskrit words such as Maha Sukritam (great kindness), Kanakajalam (golden water), Ekasareeram (one body), Chinnabhinnam (shatter to small pieces) used in *Jnananikshepam* are not so common in *Rajyasamacharam*. This does not imply that the prose in *Jnananikshepam* was not simple. There is ample evidence to prove that *Jnananikshepam* was targeted at the Christian Community which was well acquainted with Hindu literature and Sanskrit language. This inference is valid historically as well. Even today the southern style of language has a profusion of Sanskrit terms compared to the northern style, which don't have as many. The examples of *Jnananikshepam* and *Rajyasamacharam* are indications that this difference in style goes back to the commencement of modern prose.

Both A.D. Harisarma and Chummar have recorded that *Jnananikshepam* had maintained a high standard in the field of work. This was not surprising. People who knew Archdeacon Koshy and Revered George Mathen, who were at the helm of the magazine, would certainly testify to the standard they had maintained.

Another important fact is that both *Rajyasamacharam* and *Jnananikshepam* had adopted the cyclostyling method for printing. But it was *Jnananikshepam* which switched over to printing from movable types first. In so far as *Jnananikshepam* was the first news magazine that carried regional news and government announcements, the magazine was a real forerunner in the history of news magazines. There were novels before *Indulekha*.

But it was known as the first novel which was published by *Jnananikshepam*. Logically therefore, *Jnananikshepam* could be described as fulfilling all the appropriate qualities required for a standard newspaper.

MALAYALAM LITERATURE AND CHRISTIANS DISCUSSIONS AND COMPLETION

Dr. Scaria Saccaria

“According to available knowledge, *Jnananikshepam* which Dr. Thomas regards as the second periodical in Malayalam, was in fact the third Malayalam newspaper. Till K.P. Vareed discovered *Rajyasamacharam* and *Paschimodayam*, scholars had deemed *Jnananikshepam* as the first Malayalam newspaper. Prof. M.K. Cherian Kozhuvallor found the first issue of *Jnananikshepam*, in which the words Kottayam, Vrischikam 1, 1848 were printed. In several authoritative documents, the name of *Jnananikshepam* has been wrongly referred to. Having a price of one ‘Chakram’ (copper coin), *Jnananikshepam* was published by CMS missionaries. Its first editor might have been Benjamin Baily. Rev. George Mathen and Archdeacon Koshy have contributed to the management of the magazine. *Rajyasamacharam* and *Paschimodayam* had the cyclostyling method for printing.

Jnananikshepam had along with articles on the promotion of knowledge as well as for spiritual program, also included governmental matters and regional news. For these reasons, it could be branded as possessing the appropriate qualities of a standard newspaper. Professor M.K. Cherian assigns the premier position to *Jnananikshepam* among the ancient

newspapers for the following reasons.

1. The magazine which was published without a break till today.
2. The first newspaper to have begun publication with all the generally accepted standard qualities and characteristics.
3. The first newspaper to have switched over to printing from the method of cyclostyling.

However the first two reasons cited here are contrary to facts. Because *Jnananikshepam* ceased publication in 1870. And John Chandy recommenced publication in 1898. Nevertheless, *Jnananikshepam* has the reputation of being the oldest publication among the periodicals. *Jnananikshepam* began the practice of serialized stories in magazines. Archdeacon Koshy’s *Pullelikunju* which appeared in the issues of 1860 is a perfect example of this. Today newspapers print calendars and distribute them. *Jnananikshepam* had included a calendar in it. The presence of pencil sketches of Mrs. Henry Baker Junior in the magazine pages made it a pictorial newspaper.

A comparison of the prose style of *Jnananikshepam* and *Rajyasamacharam* would disclose the differences in the use of Malayalam language by the southerners and northerners in Kerala. Fascinated by Sanskrit, the people of Travancore made use of more Sanskrit terms in language. The language of *Jnananikshepam* is a classical example of this. But there is no abundance of Sanskrit in the publications from Tellicherry. They use short sentences. As one moves south the length and complexity of sentences increase, northerners would perhaps perceive the style of *Jnananikshepam* as related to Hindu literature and Sanskrit. But comparing with the predominant prose style of Travancore, the language in *Jnananikshepam* was quite simple. Speaking generally, the wide foundation of newspaper language, particularly of modern prose, can be seen

in the earlier newspaper published from Tellicherry as well as from Kottayam. This newspaper language which originated from missionary prose, was later influenced by commercial and literary languages and eventually developed into a standard language.”

SOCIAL RENAISSANCE AND LITERATURE IN KERALA

Dr. N. Sam

“This magazine contains all details such as contents, place of publication, year, month and date of publication and so on. The practice of listing the contents in the first page was seen in this magazine for the first time. But the names of the editor and of the correspondents were not printed anywhere. Therefore it was difficult to assign the responsibility of the article to any writer. According to Ulloor the editor was Archdeacon Koshy. But R. Radhakrishnan, who had done much research regarding Malayalam Journalism is of the view that a missionary named John Hawksworth was the editor till 1856. This appears to be reasonably correct. Because, as indicated earlier, 86 issues were published continuously till 1856. Thereafter a new editor takes charge with a fresh issue number.

New branches of literature like essay and short story originated in Malayalam in the pages of this magazine. The first issue itself carried an essay with the title ‘Man’. The same issue also had other two essays with the headlines ‘Language’ and ‘Script’. In the essay on Language, the Biblical story of the Babel Tower was narrated as the cause for the diversity of languages in the world. The articles on script portray an actual event which elucidates the importance and relevance of

writing. The contents of the first issue consisted of articles on the shape of the Earth, the planets, the seven days of the week and regulation (rules) papers. These articles reflect the simple and beautiful style which paved the foundation for modern prose. The pages of *Jnananikshepam* also carried the short story titled ‘the Elephant and the Taylor’, which could be qualified as the first short story. The influence of this magazine becomes evident when we learn that the same short story, with minor variations, had been included in the text book of Kerala Varma. A travelogue, with the headline ‘The news’ written by two Parsees who went to England from Bombay was serialized from the second to the seventh issue. *Jnananikshepam* has the credit for serializing a novel for the first time. The magazine published the novel ‘Pullelikunju’ penned by Archdeacon Koshy in 1882. Thus the magazine paved the way for Malayalam prose to obtain the status of knowledge and literature.

Jnananikshepam also published National, Foreign and World news, Descriptions of each Country, the Discoveries that took place in the West and so on. The news and narratives about the discovery of Gold (issue 6), Steam Ships (issue 7), Paper (issue 8), Steam Engine (issue 10), Telegraph (issue 26) helped to spread wonder and excitement among the Malayalam readers. Along with the propagation of religion, they also disseminated knowledge.

To this news magazine also goes the credit for publishing announcements and circulars of the government for the first time. They were published from the very first issue itself under the headline ‘Regulation Papers’.

Over and above all these, the missionaries also accomplished what they considered as their duties, such as propagation of Christian teaching, criticism of Hindu beliefs and removal of improper customs through *Jnananikshepam*. Spread of

Christianity was achieved through articles on True God (issue 2), A Wonder Book (issue 10), Word of God (issue 24) and the Deaf and the Dumb (issue 26). Articles like False Devotion (issue 2), The Words and Deeds of Brahmins (issue 4), Sivarathri (issue 5), Heaven (issue 14), Reincarnation (issue 16), Hanuman (issue 28) and others criticized Hindu religious belief and at the same time put Christian teachings on a pedestal. The practice of *Sati* came under criticism in the articles 'Agni-pravesam' (issue 9). The system of 'Marumakkathayam' was ridiculed in the issue of May 1860."

THE GOLDEN CHAPTERS OF JOURNALISM IN KERALA

G. Priyadarsan

Kottayam is the maternity room of the first Malayalam newspaper in the true sense of the word. More precisely it is the C.M.S. Printing Press. Its meaningful name was *Jnananikshepam*, the first issue of which was published in Vrishchikam, 1848.

It was also adorned with an English title, 'The Treasury of Knowledge'. The Basel Mission people from Malabar had published *Rajyasamacharam* and *Paschimodayam*. Both newspapers did not cross the limited boundaries of newspaper morality; both were examples of hand written publications, whereas the first had propagation of Christian religion as its objective. The second was oriented towards the spread of Western knowledge. *Jnananikshepam* combined both these objectives in its activities. However, *Jnananikshepam* had a much wider perspective. Based on the newspaper morality of providing news, it published all the matters, which man needed to know. This implies that *Jnananikshepam* was the first news magazine which grasped the

responsibilities of a newspaper in all its profundity and operated accordingly. It was also the first magazine that used printing by movable types. Therefore, *Jnananikshepam* deserves to be called the guide that showed the path to Malayalam Journalism.

This year Malayalam Journalism completes one and a half century. Although suspended for some time and commenced again later as well as changing its shape and features, *Jnananikshepam* is the only newspaper that has survived till this day and going strong.

Baily was the originator of this good magazine. He might have used the scholarly services of local people in the matter. The first issue itself was of a high standard. But the name of the editor was not printed. From Makaram 1856, the magazine commences with a new number under a new editor. The same issue eulogizes the contributions of the editor up till that time. The following remark is noteworthy. "The European who wrote in the magazine and has worked for many years in this country is now going to his own land." This proves the conclusion of R. Radhakrishnan, who has done research in Malayalam Journalism, that the missionary John Hawksworth was the editor of *Jnananikshepam* till 1856, correct...

It is difficult to conclusively assert who all were the editors of this news magazine, originated by Bailey. The Great poet Ulloor documents in his *History of Kerala Literature* (Kerala Sahitya Charitam) that "Rev. George Mathen and Archdeacon Koshy were the main people behind the magazine." That could have been from the second stage of the magazine (from Medam 1856).

The archdeacon might not have been as knowledgeable as the priest in Sanskrit; but depth of his knowledge in language literature was far above the Kathanar. Both were highly competent in scripting books – the Kathanar in serious topics

and the archdeacon in ordinary scientific subjects. Under the able supervision of the two indigenous missionaries *Jnananikshepam* had shone with brilliance. It is not surprising therefore that the news magazine had prepared the ambience for prose literature and journalism to flourish.

One thing is certain here. Kottayam was the maternal house, where Malayalam printing and Malayalam journalism were born. Benjamin Bailey was the beacon of guidance to these two movements, which had later transformed the social, cultural and political environment of Kerala.

BENJAMIN BAILEY AND THE KOTTAYAM C.M.S. PRESS

John Chandy

“There has generally been a newspaper or magazine published from the press. The Treasury of Knowledge (Jnana Nikshepam) was the earliest newspaper in Malayalam having been started in November 1848, six years before the present writer was born. It was also the first illustrated newspaper in Malayalam, pencil sketches by Mrs. Henry Baker Junior having appeared in its early issues. It was for a long time the only Newspaper in Kerala. It was stopped about 1870, but was revived by the present writer as a magazine, in which form it still survives. Then there was the Travancore Herald (in English) published by Mr. W.H. Moore, with a Malayalam supplement called ‘Sandishta Vadi’ which means herald. The Kottayam College Magazine (in English & Malayalam) edited by the Rev. Richard Collins, and the Diocesan Gazette (in English) edited by the Rev. W. J. Richards were also issued from this press.”

THE STORY OF THE PRESS IN KERALA

R. Radhakrishnan

“Jnananikshepam (Treasury of Knowledge) the first monthly publication in the Travancore area had its first issue published in November 1848 from Kottayam, sponsored by the CMS mission. Though it was also meant for religious propagation, the magazine kept some space for local news items and some old and stale world news that had already appeared in the British Newspapers. It encouraged the growth of literary activities of the people. This magazine serialised a long story in Malayalam, ‘Pulleli Kunchu’ in the early fifties of the eighteenth century. Till 1855, eighty six volumes of the magazine were out, one volume per month. From January 1856 onwards, the volumes were again numbered. It is said that this magazine was started in 1848, just to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the birth of CMS Mission in England. John Hawksworth, a Missionary, was its editor till 1856. He arranged to get the monthly printed in beautiful 14 pt. type at the CMS press. The price of the magazine was fixed as one chakkram.

After Hawksworth there were some changes in the editing of the journal. The pages of the magazine were increased and more photographs were published. Blocks taken from pencil sketches were used in the magazine. Till 1857, another 24 volume were issued. But in the January 1859 issue, the vol. number is not seen printed, in that issue, a picture of the then Maha Raja of Travancore, Ayilyam Thirunal, was published on the cover page.

From the available historical data, it is concluded that this magazine ceased publication before 1882. But from 1898 onwards, Jnananikshepam was again published from Kottayam.”

THE MISSIONARIES AND MALAYALAM JOURNALISM

Chummar Choondal

“Rev. Benjamin Bailey started the magazine entitled Jnananikshepam in 1848 November (Vrichikam) from CMS Press, Kottayam. Jnananikshepam is also a compound word coined out of Sanskrit words Jnana and Nikshepam which means Treasury of Knowledge. The contents of the journal have done justice to the title. The selection of the title and the poem which appeared in the journal give clear evidence of Rev. Bailey’s love and understanding of the Sanskrit language. The title was printed both in English and in Malayalam in the front page of the magazine.

The size of the periodical was demi 1/8. The number of pages were eight; fourteen point types. Jnananikshepam first appeared in four pages which later developed into eight. Just below the title, either side of the journal under the banner ‘Sangathivivarangal’ (subject Matter) one after another....

The preface to the first issue promises in the issues to follow, information, both useful and interesting on various matters, in addition to articles on faith, medical matters, astronomy etc. The very first issue contained items on internal and foreign news, news about the life, styles of different peoples, items on birds, animals, plants, the Travancore State, the Government Regulations etc. Jnananikshepam was published by Rev. Bailey to bring about the all round development of the life of Christians of Malabar. In the editions of 1860 Rev. Bailey has placed a five point programme to improve life of Christians.

1. To publish important national and international news concerning church.

2. To write commentaries on lessons from the Bible.
3. Discussion of various problems of contemporary Christians.
4. Criticism of catholic philosophy.
5. Criticism of evil customs prevailing among Syrian Christians...

Another commendable feature of Jnananikshepam is its inter community circulation. Orthodox Hindus and Fanatic Muslims read the magazine drawn by its attractive display of items. Thus Jnananikshepam was so to say the popular Malayalam magazine acceptable to the members of all communities, Geevarghese Kathanar, a famous prose writer in Malayalam and Arch Deacon Umman Koshi were its regular contributors.

According to Vidwan A.D. Harisarma and Vidwan T.M. Chummar Jnananikshepam kept up a high standard. Sree Ulloor S. Parameswara Iyer has also remarked that this periodical maintained a high degree of perfection in respect of prose style....

Jnananikshepam had other advantages over the journals (1) It was the only magazine published without interruption for the last 125 years. (2) It is the first magazine which imbibed all the features of a modern journal. (3) It was the first magazine printed in printing machine.

The title Jnananikshepam was mistaken by the Press commission and misprinted as Vignananikshepam in its report published in 1971. Of course there is no change in the connotation of the term. This inadvertent error occurred again when the late Shri. K.V.Raghvan Nair, editor of Gomathi published an article in one of the souvenirs brought out in connection with the Travancore-Cochin journalist union in 1955. It appears that the Indian Press Commission depended

on this article and repeated the mistake in the title of the journal and the year of its publication which is wrongly entered as 1840 instead of 1848.”

HISTORY OF INDIAN PRESS: GROWTH OF NEWSPAPERS IN INDIA

B. N. Ahuja

“In Malayalam, as in Tamil the printing press was introduced by Christian Missionaries towards the end of the 15th century and the first publications were Missionary tracts and religious propaganda literature and although considerable printing must have been done in the interval, the first book printed and published in Malayalam in 1772 came from Rome and regular types in place of the earlier woodcuts followed. The only newspapers published in the early period were Vignyana Nikshepam (1840) published from Kottayam and PaschimaTharaka (1862) from Cochin.”

EARLY PRINTING AND ORIGIN OF THE PRESS IN KERALA: CONTRIBUTIONS OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES

George Veliparambil

“The First issue of the third Malayalam monthly journal, Jnananikshepam (Treasury of Knowledge) was published on 16th November, 1848 by Rev. Bailey of the Church Missionary Society at Kottayam. The standard of production was better

than the other two periodicals referred to. Though it was by and large dedicated to missionary work, in due-course the secular content of the paper increased.”

HISTORICAL NOTICES ON THE EARLY JOURNALISM OF KERALA.

R. Madu Devan Nair

The Kottayam Press established in 1821 by Benjamin Bailey, a Priest of the Church Mission Society also deserves special attention in this regard. He compiled two dictionaries, a Malayalam English Dictionary and an English Malayalam Dictionary. Apart from this he translated the Bible and the common prayer into Malayalam and printed them. He adopted the English style of construction of sentences with the use of punctuations. His dictionary and grammar were valuable contributions to Malayalam language and literature which gave an impetus to its critical study. His *Jnananikshepam* though later than Gundert's, was perhaps the first popular magazine in Malayalam in 1848. It covered all subjects from agriculture to astrology. No less a person than Mahakavi Ulloor had praised the high standard of the prose style maintained by this periodical. Still as the name of the magazine indicated it dealt with the *Jnanam* or knowledge of Christian faith. It was the treasure-house of the doctrines of Christianity in its essence.

Like Bailey's *Jnananikshepam*, *Rajyasamacharam* and *Paschimodayam* also contained Christian news. The *Rajyasamacharam* was the samacharam or news of the Christian world. In *Paschimodayam* we get same world news with emphasis on the rise and growth of the western world. Perhaps they cannot be blamed for their Christian way of

thinking because primarily they were missionaries and their sole aim was to bring maximum number of aspirants into the fold of Christianity. However at the fag end of 1851 both of them ceased publication. But Bailey's *Jnananikshepam* continues to be published from Kottayam, even today as a magazine devoted to religion.

CORRESPONDING ENGLISH AND MALAYALAM MONTHS

English Month		Malayalam Month
January	-	Dhanu, Makaram
February	-	Makaram, Kumbham
March	-	Kumbham, Meenam
April	-	Meenam, Medam
May	-	Medam, Edavam
June	-	Edavam, Mithunam
July	-	Mithunam, Karkkadakam
August	-	Karkkadakam, Chingam
September	-	Chingam, Kanni
October	-	Kanni, Thulam
November	-	Thulam, Vrischikam
December	-	Vrischikam, Dhanu

(Malayalam month begins on the 17th of the English month and lasts up to the 16th of the next English month. e.g. Dhanu = December 17th to January 16th, ...)

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